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HARVEST GLEANINGS.

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Yours very sincerely
Marianne Farningham

HARVEST GLEANINGS AND GATHERED FRAGMENTS

By
Marianne Farningham
AUTHOR OF "LEAVES FROM ELIM" &c



"LET FALL SOME OF THE HANDFULS OF PURPOSE
FOR HER, AND LEAVE THEM." BOAZ.

LONDON
JAMES CLARKE & CO.,
13 & 14, FLEET STREET.
1903

TO
MY FRIENDS OF MANY YEARS
IN MANY PLACES
WHO HAVE WELCOMED MY WORDS IN VERSE
IN
"THE CHRISTIAN WORLD"
AND
"THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES"
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

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SONGS OF THE FATHER'S LOVE.



Songs of the Father's Love.

OUR FATHER.

OUR mothers taught us Thy dear name,
God of our life and death ;
Our happy childhood whispered it,
Sometimes with bated breath.
Dear Father, whom we might not see,
We could not be afraid of Thee.

We knew in every thunderstorm
That we were in Thy care,
The darkness could not frighten us,
Since Thou wert everywhere.
Whatever came of smooth or rough,
We had a Father. 'Twas enough.

And do we know Thee less or more
Now years have made us wise ?
We lift to Thee our burdened hearts.
Our wistful, longing eyes ;
We need Thee, Father, still the same,
And all our prayer is in Thy name !

Christ taught us what it means to have
A Father. Every day
Some want compels us to Thy feet,
Though with no words to say ;
We only speak Thy name, and then
Courage and hope come back again.

Our Father knows, our Father cares—
How great Thy gentleness !
We dare to live, and dare to die,
Who are not fatherless.
Dear Father, whom we cannot see,
All life is glad because of Thee.

THE FATHER'S VOICE.

"He wakeneth morning by morning; He wakeneth mine ear to hear."—ISAIAH L. 4.

No dreams are sweet enough to keep
My senses in repose of sleep.

When once the Father speaks to me—
So softly speaks, I only hear,
And no one else can guess how dear
The Voice that wakens me can be.

No mother's kiss more gently wakes
Her child, when merry morning breaks
With spreading light, and song of bird—
The child, that cannot help but greet
With happy answering smile, the sweet
And tender love in mother's word!

Most calm and holy is the night;
No losing battles are to fight,
No heavy loads to lift and bear!
Such tranquil hours in sleep are spent,
So safe the sleeper, so content—
There is not even need for prayer.

The morning is not always glad,
Even some Mays in mists are clad,
And sorrow wakes as soon as I.
Yet at the Father's lightest word
My thoughts and impulses are stirred,
And trusting love prevents the sigh.

I know not what the day shall bring,
And yet I dread not anything
That through the morning reaches me.
I have not sight that can discern,
But I can meekly try to learn
What the great Father teaches me.

I am His scholar, and His child;
And He is kind; His rule is mild;
His patience is most wonderful.

His simple ones are ably taught,
And guidance comes to hand and thought
If but the heart be dutiful.

Oh, brothers of His family,
How glad all waking hours must be,
That pass in listening to His voice ;
For when He gives the strenuous task,
He gives the wisdom that we ask,
And makes the morn and eve rejoice.

Let us but keep the attentive ear,
The perfect love that casts out fear,
The steady eye that seeks His light,
And He the ready tongue will move
To speak to others of His love,
From happy morn to happier night !

“ MY FATHER’S HOUSE.”

THE Father’s House has many rooms,
And each is fair ;
And some are reached through gathered glooms
By silent stair ;
But He keeps house, and makes it home
Whichever way the children come.

Plenty and peace are everywhere
His House within ;
The rooms are eloquent with prayer,
The songs begin.
And dear hearts, filled with love, are glad,
Forgetting that they once were sad.

The Father’s House is surely thine,
Therefore, why wait ?
His lights of love through darkness shine,
The hour grows late.
Push back the curtain of thy doubt,
And enter—none will cast thee out !

THE LOVE THAT KNOWS.

"It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer."

DID you ask Him for the sunshine ? Did you beg Him for the rain ?

Last night did you implore Him to give you one more day ?
Oh, I know that you beseech Him to take away your pain :

But what of all the blessings for which you never pray ?
His gentle touch at nightfall, His morning kiss at waking,

The whisper of His tenderness among the summer trees,
The bounding pulse of gladness, true love the heart-thirst
slaking,

The common things of every day you have not asked for
these.

To have only that you ask for would be poverty indeed,

But the love of God looks onward—Love does not wait for
prayer,

And He had the blessings ready before you felt the need,

For the Father-heart is wonderful, and swift His tender
care,

Does mother wait to feed her child until she hears it crying ?

Does not a father know, and meet, the needs of his young
boy ?

And God's great love though strong enough to train us by denying,

Answers the wish unspoken, and in giving finds its joy.

You need His great redemption ; the Father gave His Son

Before the world asked for Him. The heaven of our desire
Was long ago made ready. The victory was won

Before we faced the battle, or knew how fierce the fire.

'Twas God, and not His children, who thought of our salvation :

When sin began in Eden His love was there before,

And Christ became our Saviour, His death the great oblation,

To show the world that mercy keeps an ever open door.

Dear heart, pray on for comfort ; a holy thing is prayer ;

It lifts the spirit upward to the very feet of God,

It fills the darkest lowlands with a breath of mountain air,

It brings a glad spring prophecy across the wintry sod.

But the child who knows the Father should breathe in glad
thanksgiving.

And sing as do the angels for the very joy of praise,
Should keep a Sabbath always, a festival of living,
Because of all the unasked good with which God fills the days.

IS ALL WELL ?

GOES the watchman through the night :

Hark the bell !

Are the people safely dwelling ?

Are the angels good news telling ?

Are the hymns of gladness swelling ?

Is there any foe in sight ?

Is all well ?

Ah ! the moon and stars above,

What see they ?

Do the workers who are weary

Lose in sleep their troubles dreary,

And awake to hopes more cheery ?

Do they know the power of love

For each day ?

Watchman, what of this late night ?

Hear the knell !

Do you know men tired of trying ?

Can you hear prayer end in sighing ?

Do you see the people dying ?

Is the haven yet in sight ?

Is all well ?

And the watchman smiled, and said

Will you tell ?

All the sad hearts in the city

Are quite safe in God's great pity ;

And the sorrow and the sadness

Shall with morning change to gladness ;

God, and Love, are overhead :

All is well.

THE PRODIGAL SON AT HOME.

I AM forgiven ; and am within
My Father's house again,
With love and gladness in the place
Of loneliness and pain ;
Joy fills the sweet, long day with praise,
My heart sings out its bliss,
For a new life is given me with
My Father's welcome kiss.

So sheltered, and so safe from storm,
And pardoned utterly,
Glad should I be could I undo
My works of vanity :
My Father's love is wonderful,
It crowns my life—and yet
A shadow dims my lighted way,
For I cannot forget.

Even His love, though strong, must fail
My lost things to restore,
I wasted all my substance once,
I have it never more :
My health and wealth and youth are gone,
Nor prayers, nor bitter tears,
Can bring me back a single day
Of all my wasted years.

This must remain to burden me
With sorrow and with shame,
I grieved my Father's heart, and brought
Dishonour on His Name.
Freely forgiven, and amply blest,—
Yet how much happier they
Who never left the Father's House,
Nor strayed from Him away.

THY KINGDOM COME.

“The Kingdom of God is within you.”—JESUS

No need of banners waving high,
Nor martial pomp of sword and gun,
Nor glittering armies marching nigh,
Nor honours boldly won ;
God's Kingdom comes in quietness,
In peace and joy and righteousness.

You hear it in the wind and rain ?
Nay, these may beat and roar outside ;
In perfect calm those hearts remain
That in God's heaven abide ;
And heaven is here and everywhere
If only love and God be there.

Dear faces, hidden from the storm,
And kissed by tender lips at night,
In storied hall, in cottage warm,
Live in the Kingdom's light.
And hearts in which God's peace is king
Rule over worlds at sunrising.

When shall God's Kingdom come ? When men
Let love reign over them, not hate ;
When this poor world shall ne'er again
Through sin be desolate ;
And God shall find on earth His home—
O Father, let Thy Kingdom come !

GOD'S COMFORTINGS.

"Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

LONG is our journey to the dear Home-land,
But God will guide us till at home we stand.

How, if the times are hard, shall we be fed ?
God gives us day by day our daily bread.

The lightning flashes and the winds are rough :
God is our shelter, we are safe enough.

The fog is thick, we cannot see our way,
But He will walk beside us lest we stray.

We have much sorrow, and our dear ones die :
God the great Comforter is always nigh.

Our youth ends quickly, and our joys depart :
God is the strength and solace of the heart.
Life is too full of labour and of care :
God bears the burdens given to Him in prayer.

We grow so eager in our earthly quest :
But God is love, and love is perfect rest.

Some of His children grieve Him by their sin :
The Father's heart is kind and takes them in.

We are not good, we all have evil done :
To save the world God gave His only Son.

How may we know the Father and His grace ?
By looking into Jesus' life and face.

GOD LOVES THE WORLD.

It seems the very air is full

Of this sweet thought to make us glad;
It makes the earth all beautiful,

Whether with flowers or snowflakes clad.
In sunshine or in darkening shade.
God loves the world that He has made.

All voices echo forth this truth ;

The children put it in their songs ;
And white-haired men and blooming youth,
The serious and the merry throngs,
Unite the happy tale to tell :
Our Father loves His children well.

We hear it in the shadowy aisles

Of the cathedral old and dim ;
It lights the singer's face with smiles,
It makes the grandest festal hymn,
It fills with joy and holy mirth
All sweetest choruses of earth.

And women at their household ways,

To soothe the fever of their care,
Have put it in the cradle lays,
And there is music in their prayer ;
And their hearts grow more strong and free
As each one says, " He loveth me."

And men amid the rush and strife,

The wear-and-tear and eagerness
That mark and make our modern life.

Have found in this their quietness :
And, while the crowded streets they trod,
Have rested in the love of God.

Oh, who could bear his burden now

Were he not sure God loves the world ?
For fear and labour make us bow,

And days are dark, and storms are hurled.
But, like a star that ne'er grows dim,
God's love shines on, we trust in Him.

THE COMFORT OF FAITH.

Love dares to question,
But not rebel ;
All that Thou doest,
O Lord, is well,
Though how it be so
We cannot tell.

Love knows Thee, Father ;
Thy power above
All that is mortal
Thy children prove,
And rest in the stronghold
Of Thy great love.

Speak through the silence
Of this dark hour,
Take from our sorrow
Its hurtful power,
And Thy calm comfort
Give us for dower.

What is the meaning ?
For that we wait ;
Of all the mystery
Death is the gate ;
We shall know, and bless Thee,
And not too late.

Bearer of sorrows,
To Thee we cry ;
Thou didst die for us ;
And when we die
This is our comfort,
That Thou art nigh.

Now we thank Thee
For sweet release ;
The touch of thine angel
Makes pain to cease,
And the life eternal
Is perfect peace.

A FULFILLED PROMISE.

“As thy day thy strength shall be.”

THESE words, hung where I could see,
Ere my childhood passed from me,
Deeper meaning have to-day.
While I tread a troubled way.
Like some unforgotten song
Staying with me all day long,
So this promise comforts me :
“As thy day thy strength shall be.”

Merrily the time went on,
Till the easy years were gone ;
Then the conflict fiercer grew,
And I more of sorrow knew ;
Yet amid the stress and strain
Of the work, or loss, or pain,
Came no time but I have seen
As my day my strength has been.

Burdens far too great to bear
Came, with no strong friend to share
Work too high for me to do
But for Him who helps me through ;
Cares I could not keep alone —
These I know as I have known —
But the Father speaks to me :
“As thy day thy strength shall be.”

Ever to my heart I take
That He gives for love's dear sake :
And, whatever be my lot,
His good promise fails me not.
He is near in darkest night,
And He leads me into light.
Happy am I, safe and free :
“As my day my strength shall be.”

Do not fear to trust to Him,
Ye who walk through pathways dim.
God's care reaches from above
Unto you. And God is love.

Whether life or death shall come,
Whether wandering or at home,
Fear not ; you shall surely see :
" As your day your strength shall be."

ANSWERED.

" Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses."

In the desert's desolation
Was no place of habitation.
Hungry, thirsty, faint and lonely,
Who could help them but God only ?
So they cried : and He who blesses
Brought them out of their distresses,
Satisfied them with His pity,
Gave them homes within His city.
Death and darkness were around them,
Bonds of strong affliction bound them.
He was mighty to deliver,
In His strength they dwell for ever.
They were filled with fear and wonder
When they heard the wild waves thunder
Then again they cried to Heaven,
And the help they asked was given.
Hushed was all the storm and riot :
They were glad, for they were quiet.
Oh, let all whose hearts aspire
To their haven of desire
Cry to God in their distresses :
Still He hears, and still He blesses.
And the prayer of faith shall ever
Find Him ready to deliver.

BE RECONCILED.

“ We beseech you, on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.”

THE gorse and heather are in bloom—
Why is your face so dark with gloom ?
Why, on these sweet and quiet days,
Rise from your lips no songs of praise ?
Ah ! if the heart be not at rest,
True joy is aye an absent guest ;
But still the Father loves His child—
Be reconciled.

What comes between your soul and Him ?
The love of God no change can dim ;
If you have sinned and gone astray,
The road home is an easy way.
Relent, repent, and trust His grace,
Return and seek the Father's face ;
Though you are weak, forlorn, defiled,
Be reconciled.

Come home to God, nor be afraid ;
Your sins were on your Saviour laid.
He lived, and died, and rose to win
All men from trespasses and sin.
On God's behalf with you He pleads ;
He heeds your sorrows, knows your needs.
Oh, wanderer in the desert wild,
Be reconciled.

You are so weary and so sad,
Only His love can make you glad.
Why close your heart to Him ? Why wait
Stricken, alone and desolate ?
Come home ; be sheltered from alarms,
So safe within the Father's arms.
He waits for you, you are His child,
Be reconciled.

He keeps for you an open door,
And love itself can do no more
Than He has done. Oh, why delay ?
Child, let the Father have His way,
And show you, while He makes your heaven,
How good it is to be forgiven.
For Christ's sake, be ye reconciled—
Be reconciled.

"HE BRINGETH THEM."

PSALM CVII. 30.

God guides across the trackless sea
The children of His love :
The wild winds gather round the ships,
The clouds are dark above ;
But He keeps watch through all the night,
And they are safe as in the light.

Huge waves beat on them in the storm,
Yet they may calmly sleep
Who knows His stars are overhead,
His wonders in the deep ;
Through rising winds and lifted waves
He stretches forth the hand that saves.

God's ocean is so large and wide
Their spirits are dismayed
When the wave mountains shut them in,
Or rushing hosts invade,
But they cry out amid their fear,
And God's " Fear Not " rings loud and clear.

And then they know their Father nigh,
The stilled waves chant a psalm,
His " Hush ! " falls on their timid hearts,
He makes the storm a calm,
And they who were by dread oppress,
Are gently soothed to sleep and rest.

But aye, through stillness and through storm,
Some leagues are daily won,
Alike in sunshine and in gloom
The homeward bound sail on,
And near, with every sunset's fire,
The haven of their heart's desire.

And they all find a tranquil sea
Awaiting them at last ;
God makes them glad with quietness,
When all the storms are past.
O sailors over life's rough main,
Remember ! and take heart again.

SONGS OF THE SAVIOUR'S GRACE.

Songs of the Saviour's Grace.

UNTIL HE FIND.

THE wandering soul goes forth alone,
Farther from home with each dark night,
And hides him from the friendly light,
And only echoes back our moan.

But One who loves goes after him
O'er trackless moor and mountain slope,
Nor ceases toil, nor loses hope,
Though miles are long and days are dim.

He searches for him everywhere,
He listens for the sigh of fear,
The faintest cry will reach His ear,
The boon will be before the prayer.

He will not weary day nor night.
For any time, at any cost,
The Christ will seek and save the lost,
And bring him home into the light.

Strong, patient, and enduring One !
We also seek, but soon we tire :
He, burning with intense desire,
Will cease not till the work be done.

“ Until He find ! ” Until He find !
So full of strong resolve is He,
No matter where the lost one be,
The Christ will seek until He find.

O Seeker pitiful ! we have
Our lost ones, and we know not where
They languish, nor if any prayer
Beseeches Thee to help and save.

But in Thy heart, not theirs, we trust :
They are not lost, for Thou wilt find :
We hear Thy word divinely kind—
“ I seek and save, because I must.”

FOR LOVE OF YOU.

ONE loves you. He has loved you long.
His love and its sweet prayer and praise
Were in your mother's cradle song,
And made the music of your days,
When flowers were fair, and skies were blue,
For love of you.

He told the secret of His love,
When merry laughter answered Him,
By dancing seas, in leafy grove,
Before your childhood's eyes were dim,
When life lay like a sunny view,
For love of you.

Now, has the shadow touched your face ?
Are the days dark ? the prospects grey ?
O heart, be brave ! The time of grace
Can never pass from you away.
Your Friend is tender, wise and true,
For love of you.

He walked for you earth's changeable ways,
He bore for you the lonely hour,
He lived for you through toilsome days,
He met for you the tempter's power,
And joy through sorrow this Friend knew,
For love of you.

O child of love, be not still sad,
But change the sigh to happy song,
For you can make the Saviour glad
By loving Him who loved you long.
So fill with praise the heavens above,
For God is love.

“LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS.”

ART Thou with me, my Saviour ?
The night is dark,
I feel the billows tossing
Around my barque ;
Nor moon nor star is shining
Above the sea,
But I will rest and fear not ;
Thou art with me.

My kind, lifelong Companion,
I know Thy voice,
And, hearing through the tempest,
I can rejoice :
But even if Thou speak not
My heart is glad ;
With Thee the deepest silence
Is never sad.

I will not heed the darkness.
Is the hour late ?
And will it soon be sunrise ?
Yet I can wait :
Dear Lord, I am not troubled
By fear, or quest,
Above the restless waters
I have sweet rest.

I sail, and see not whither,
But, if Thou steer,
I know the lighted haven.
Not far, but near.
No need to wake the sailors :
On land or sea,
I am content for ever,
Alone with Thee.

"CONTINUE YE IN MY LOVE."

DEAR Master, when the days are dim,
And stars shine not in skies above,
Thy word is like some sacred hymn—
 "Continue in My love."

O Love, that cheered my childish days,
And blesses me at evening-tide,
And lights for me the misty ways,
What have I left beside ?

Faded the flowers of early years,
And bare the trees that sheltered me ;
Whom can I see through all my tears ?
Thee, Master—only Thee.

I am so used to all Thy grace,
Thine is the dear familiar voice,
I seem to see and read Thy face,
And in Thy love rejoice.

I trust thee, for I know Thee well ;
It is myself I dare not trust.
Dear Master, bid me with Thee dwell,
And love because I must.

Thy love lasts on through stress and strain,
My treasure when all else is gone,
Unchanged by loss, unhurt by pain—
Ah ! how Thy love lasts on !

I dare not vow to faithful be ;
But Thou, O Friend, all friends above,
I rest my very life on Thee—
Continue Thou in love.

“AS HE IS IN THE LIGHT.”

His path leads into shining light.
The sun is in my Master's face,
No gloom hides Him from morn to night;
He is so full of love and grace
That where He walks the way is fair,
And joy is with Him everywhere.

I do not like a darkened room,
Nor stumbling steps o'er weary ways;
I am afraid of night and gloom,
No song of hope my heart can raise;
The light would set my spirit free:
Dear Master, let me walk with Thee.

Let in the light upon my soul!
Alas! it will reveal my sin,
And make me long to be made whole,
And be forgiven, and cleansed within;
But though I faint with shame and fright,
Yet flood my soul, O Lord, with light.

My Saviour, work, even in me,
The miracle of each new day;
Let the sun rise and darkness flee,
And the dear light about me stay:
So shall I live, and pray, and move
In the glad radiance of Thy love.

HE CARETH.

WHAT can it mean ? Is it aught to Him
That the nights are long and the days are dim ?
Can He be touched by the griefs I bear,
Which sadden the heart and whiten the hair ?
About His throne are eternal calms,
And strong, glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss unruffled by any strife—
How can He care for my little life ?

And yet I want Him to care for me
While I live in this world where the sorrows be !
When the lights die down from the path I take,
When strength is feeble, and friends forsake,
When love and music that once did bless
Have left me to silence and loneliness,
And my life-song changes to sobbing prayers—
My heart cries out for a God who cares.

The busy world has too much to do
To stay its courses and help me through ;
And I long for a Saviour. Can it be
That the God of the universe cares for me ?
Oh, wonderful story of deathless love !
Each child is dear to the heart above ;
The sorrow that bowed me down He bears,
And loves and pardons because He cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again
We are not alone in our hours of pain ;
God lifts the burden, for He is strong.
He stills the sigh and awakes the song.
Can it be trouble which He doth share ?
Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord does care.

WITHIN SHUT DOORS.

“Jesus cometh, the doors being shut.”

No other can come in
But Thou and I ;
Dear Master, in the silence
Thou art nigh ;
I shut the door on sin
And care and doubt,
All that displeases Thee
I would keep out.
Speak to me now,
Bid unbelief to cease,
Give me Thy touch of blessing
And Thy peace.

Oh ! for a little while
I would forget
Even my very self,
Nor fear, nor fret
For any earthly thing,
But see Thy face,
And lose myself
For joy of all Thy grace.
I have no good to crave,
Desire shall cease,
I find my heaven at last
With Thee, and peace.

Is the rest ended ?
Does the day begin ?
Must the doors open
And the world come in ?
Yet will I keep for Thee,
Sacred, apart,
A place for glad communion
In my heart.
Stay with me, O my Saviour,
And release
My spirit from all bondage
In Thy peace.

NIGHT ON OLIVET.

"Every man went unto his own home. Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives."

WHERE was the great King's palace-home ?

He had not where to lay His head !

No friendly voice invited Him,

None cared to offer board and bed :

Small share had He of warmth or mirth,

Whose love lights all the homes of earth.

The lonely Christ ! He went away

From clustering homes, and, through the shade
Of menacing Gethsemane,

With patient feet His way He made,

God only measuring His hopes,

As silently He climbed the slopes.

But space and welcome met Him there !

The meek flowers covered up His feet,
And all the silver olive-leaves

Soothed Him with whispers low and sweet,

The soft winds murmured a glad psalm,

The blue heavens gave Him rest and calm.

It was the joyous summertime.

And God's fair world, in love with Him,
Received Him into sheltering arms,

And all night long no star grew dim,

No harsh rains fell, no cold winds blew,

But Nature's heart was warm and true.

And all that passed on Olivet

Between the Father and the Son

Is kept a secret even yet !

Only we know God's will was done,

And Christ, refreshed and strong again,

Sought His beloved world of men.

Some of His grace seems lingering yet
Upon the green and tree-crowned height.
Oh, happy hill that so might serve
The Christ upon that strenuous night !
Precious and revered even yet,
For His sake, art thou, Olivet.

THE GRAVE IN THE GARDEN.

WHERE the sweet spring flowers were growing,
There they made His tomb !
Gladly shone the sun above Him
After winter's gloom.

All the birds awoke to matins,
All sung vespers there ;
Happiest place to sleep and wake in
Was that garden fair.

Wild flowers clung in tufts and bunches
To the rugged rocks,
Cedars spread their stately branches,
Lilies grew in flocks.

Oh, the scene was calm and peaceful
All the three days long,
Till at last from out the silence
Broke an angel's song.

We have graves within our garden,
We are touched by death,
But there needs no lamentation
For the passing breath.

Night shall bring us nearer Jesus ;
Death takes not, but gives
Sleep, as He slept in the garden,
Life with Him who lives.

CHRIST'S EASTER GREETING.

"All hail!" and "Fear not,"
These were the words He said,
The Christ beloved,
Rising from the dead,
And thus the women
Joyfully were sped.

"All hail!" and "Fear not,"
Words we need to-day;
Christ Jesus, speak them,
And our fears allay,
As we pass ever
To the unseen way!

"All hail!" and "Fear not"—
Hear the world's sad cry,
Pity us, Saviour,
Lest we faint and die;
Hope comes, and courage,
When we know Thee nigh.

"All hail!" and "Fear not"—
Saviour, at the last,
Amid the shadows
That shall gather fast,
Speak Thou to us,
Until our fears are past.

Be this Thy greeting
When the new lights shine!
Oh, for that Easter,
And these words of Thine!
"All hail!" and "Fear not"—
Jesus, make them mine!

SONGS OF LOVE AND HOME.

Songs of Love and Home.

GOD BLESS OUR HOME.

We come from the fog-laden streets of the city,
From wide, windy spaces where the cold has no pity,
From close, darkened room, or from bleak hill and moor,
To thankfully enter the welcoming door—
And God bless our home !

We come from the fights and the races of life,
From the fierce din of voices, the conflict and strife,
From the tempests of words that are thundering loud,
From the riot, unquiet and stress of the crowd—
And God bless our home !

O snug little nest in a shelter so cheery,
O place of sweet rest for the troubled and weary,
Each day has its Sabbath of prayer and of psalm,
Where the Church in the house is kept sacred and calm—
So God bless our home !

No spot is so dear to the heart, nor is any
Ignored by so few, or beloved by so many,
Where dear eyes smile on us, and kind voices speak,
There find we the pledge of the heaven we seek—
And God bless our home !

Yes, God give the home His abundant good blessing,
God shelter its roof from all evil distressing,
And grant to its inmates the spirit of love
Which rules in the Home of our Father above—
And so bless our home !

God make us unselfish, devoted and dutiful,
Meek, merry, kindly, wise, tender and beautiful,
And not only here where we offer our prayer,
But Himself love our home and abide with us there—
And so God bless our home !

AN OLD LEGEND FOR NEW TIMES.

FAIR is the chapel, stately and strong,
Though the sculptor's hand has perished long ;
But the old-time carvings and what they say
Are grandly significant even to-day.
The book is open, and all may read
Of knightly battle and courtly deed,
For ended sorrows and grief-quenched smiles
Seem to revive in the silent aisles ;
And many a stately monument
'Midst the solemn arches and blazonment
Tells a touching story—but this one most,
Which ends itself in half-shame, half-boast :

*“ Love made me Poet,
And this I writt,
My harte did doe itt
And not my witt.”*

The words of a woman ! One who began
To tell the deeds of a brave, good man ;
She was a widow, and great the loss
That lay on her heart a heavy cross ;
But nerving her soul to tell of his life,
How tender in mercy, noble in strife,
Kind to the poor, stern to the wrong,
Her words took shape and became a song,
And grew a poem to her surprise,
Who counted herself not great nor wise.
What was it thus could have made her write ?
She saw it all in a flash of light—

*“ Love made me Poet,
And this I writt,
My harte did doe itt
And not my witt.”*

Old is the legend, as hills are old ;
New is the legend and bright as gold.
Who counts the poets that love has made,
And nursed and cherished in shine and shade ?
They make the music of all the spheres,
They paint the beauty on all the years,
They lift life out of the commonplace,
These grand love-poets of happy grace !
Because they love they are truly great,
Though the world should deem them of low estate ;
Because they love does the quickened brain
Tell of its joy in the old refrain—

*“ Love made me Poet,
And this I writt,
My harte did doe itt
And not my witt.”*

Love, the transformer evermore,
Teaches the happy thought to soar,
Like a bird that rises on buoyant wing
And is so glad that it needs must sing.
Love, the awakener, gives for dower
The vivid life, and the loftier power,
Whispers secrets, and lights the eyes,
Till the soul shines through and the words are wise.
'Tis never winter, but always May,
A time of laughter, a holiday
When love gives largesse, and life is bliss,
And what can the loving say but this ?—

*“ Love made me Poet,
And this I writt,
My harte did doe itt
And not my witt.”*

GOD IN THE GARDEN.

THE world was a garden, and fields and woods
Were soft in the fading light,
A hush came over the sloping hills,
All things waited for night.

A child stood listening under the leaves :
“Is it God’s step I can hear ?
He walked in the Garden of Eden once.”
The prattler showed no fear.

“But Adam and Eve were afraid of God !”
“Yes, they had done wrong,” she said.
“And so have you, often.” “Yes, so I have,”
And the darling bowed her head ;

“But I am not frightened, because I know
That He loves me all the same.”
“And what would you do if you heard Him now
Calling to you by name ?”

“I would run as fast as I could to Him,”
The little one said, and smiled.
And I took the lesson of love to my heart
That I learnt that night from the child.

TOGETHER.

’TWAS a summer of one of the yesterdays.
Do you remember ?
From June to September
Life led us along its pleasant ways.
We talked and were silent, we sang and dreamed,
And had all the world to ourselves, it seemed ;

There was sorrowless joy in the fresh, sweet air,
The fields and the hedges were strangely fair,
And all things growing told us their hopes,
As we walked in the valleys or climbed the slopes ;
The breeze kissed everything—kissed us, too—
And we learnt the birds' love-songs, I and you,
And oh, how we *lived* in that sunny weather,
Together !

All things were glad in those radiant days,
From June to September ;
Do you remember ?

It was a summer too sweet to praise !
We stood together among the hay
When I dreamed there was something you wished to say ;
We were afloat on the tranquil sea
When first I knew that you cared for me ;
The sweet, wild roses were in the lane
When my heart awoke to a bliss, half pain ;
And there never was such a day before
As that which we spent on the breezy moor,
When, sure of each other, we gathered the heather
Together.

Long, long ago were those matchless days !
Do you remember
That June and September ?
We have walked since then such different ways.
I think of it all to-day, but you,
Away up there beyond the blue—
I cannot be sure that you do not forget,
You have so much other to think of. Yet,
The best that we had on the earth was love,
And the source of it, home of it, is above ;
So perhaps that summer was not the end.
And there may be a fairer one yet to spend
In a happier land, and in sunnier weather
Together.

THROUGH TRIBULATION.

I HAVE asked for thee plenteousness and peace,
Not the fierce strife of warfare, nor its cost :
I have dreamed of thee with the full increase
Of summer's glory, not a treasure lost,
Thy life all sunshine, music, joy, and rest—
Have I been wise ? Are these things truly best ?

Dear, look with me through distances that hide
The earth from heaven, the little from the great,
The radiant hosts upon the other side,
By fountains of cool waters, safe, elate,
Are they who out of tribulation came—
God's love for thee can bear to choose the same.

I trust thee to His love, and not my own ;
My best, perhaps, would but impoverish thee,
If, clothed in white, thou standest by the throne,
And I may, humbly glad, thy rapture see,
Confessing my poor love not strong enough,
I will praise Him who made thy pathway rough.

SERVICEABLE.

I THINK the love that most your trust deserves
Is that which does not hesitate or doubt ;
Which asks no burden, but lasts on and serves,
And which no years nor trials can wear out ;
Which fails not, tires not on the roughest way,
And has a new birth every new-born day.

Dear, use me as you use all common things
Of which you know there is enough to spare,
Plenty for mornings and for evenings,
For summer psalms and winter's wear-and-tear.
Love such as mine takes up its song again
Alike in smiles of peace and sobs of pain.

LET THE LOVE LAST.

ANGER is swift if the love be slow,
And peace will die if the love should go ;
Let the love last and the joy will grow.

How can the face that is old look fair
When years have stamped it with pain and care ?
Only if seen through the love that is there.

Life may be tiresome, but never yet
Did the loving heart weary, or forget
The weal of the one on whom it is set.

Love is not selfish or hard or blind ;
Love in the loved does its great joy find ;
Love is tender, and true, and kind.

Sweet as the music of wedding bells
Is the love that its faithful story tells,
Though the wild winds blow and the tempest swells.

Love teaches patience, and strength, and grace,
Love sees beauty in every face,
Love makes holy the old home-place.

Love need never be dead and cold,
Love need never grow changed or old,
Love shall be better than untold gold.

So let the love last, for it is God-given ;
It will heal the heart that by grief is riven,
It will make the home like a part of heaven.

A MODERN BRIDE.

(From a Picture in Paris.)

I chose him for myself ; he is my choice,
Not yours, and not my father's—mine the voice
That uttered the decision, mine alone ;
My will has taken this man for my own,
Yet, mother, bless me !

I chose to live my own life, mother dear,
As good times and new teachers said I might.
In study, pastime, travel far and near,
I passed my pleasant youth, but now, to-night,
Oh, mother, bless me !

I think I am no more a modern girl ;
I am a woman—nay, a little child ;
Already I am tired of fashion's whirl,
I want to kneel beside you, docile, mild,
So, mother, bless me !

Is it so true that joy has always wings ?
My very happiness has taught me fear,
And life and death are very solemn things ;
I think my love has made my vision clear ;
Oh, mother, bless me !

Because you have been long an honoured wife,
And have borne bravely years with many cares,
Because I have a new strange fear of life,
Because I know God answers mothers' prayers,
My mother, bless me !

“MINE OWN PEOPLE.”

“WHAT are my people more than are others ? ”

How can you ask who have some of your own ?
Full is the world ; but one's sisters and brothers
Dwell at the heart of things, safe and alone.

Once long ago we were children together,
Playing and quarrelling, loving through all ;
And, alas ! for old age, and the drear wintry weather,
If none should remain to respond to my call.

Ah ! the long years and the pains they have taken,
To render me loyal and brave in life's quest :
And they will be true when all else have forsaken,
For the love of one's own is the love that is best.

Faithful rebukers, whose love can discriminate,
Daring to tell me of error and wrong,
Praising me rarely, yet kind in their estimate,
Blaming me shortly, but trusting me long.

Oh, my own dearest ones, stay with me, bless me,
Wait, some of you, till my life's day is past,
Love me, and laugh at me, scold or caress me,
Only remain with me on to the last.

Christ, by the comforting love of Thy mother,
Bless us in families, bless us at home ;
Hear us, dear Lord, when we pray for each other,
And grant us reunion when death shall have come.

MY NEIGHBOUR'S BOY.

HE seems to be several boys in one,
So much is he constantly everywhere !
And the mischievous things that boy has done
No mind can remember, nor mouth declare.
He fills the whole of his share of space
With his strong, straight form, and his merry face.

He is very cowardly, very brave.
He is kind and cruel, is good and bad,
A brute and a hero. Who will save
The best from the worst in my neighbour's lad ?
The mean and the noble strive to-day—
Which of the powers will have its way ?

The world is needing his strength and skill.
He will make hearts happy, or make them ache.
What power is in him for good or ill !
Which of life's paths will his swift feet take ?
Will he rise and draw others up with him,
Or the light that is in him burn low and dim ?

But what is my neighbour's boy to me
More than a nuisance ? My neighbour's boy,
Though I have some fears for what he may be,
Is a source of solicitude, hope and joy,
And a constant pleasure—because I pray
That the best that is in him will rule some day.

He passes me by with a smile and a nod,
He knows I have hope of him—guesses, too,
That I whisper his name when I ask of God
That men may be righteous, His will to do.
And I think that many would have more joy
If they loved and prayed for a neighbour's boy !

A GOOD-BYE AT THE DOOR.

Boy, with the fearless English face,
Go forth, and find the world a place
Friendly, if thou wilt prove a friend,
Contentious if thou wilt contend,
And weak to keep, if thou art strong
To wrest its best. It has a song
For joyous singers everywhere,
For gloomy souls a weight of care,
Grand tasks for all who wish for them,
For knightly brows a diadem,
Mountains to climb, and streams to leap,
And for the sluggish it has sleep.

Boy, with the bright eyes, look and see !
The world has more for thee than me,
And I have found it very good,
I think it gave me what it could ;
But it grows richer day by day,
So, do not linger, haste away !
So sweet and fair the prospect grows,
Be thy day long ere it shall close !
For lights that never shone before
Make beautiful the sea and shore,
And circle all, below, above,
In one great rainbow arc of love.

Boy, with brave heart, be not afraid ;
Go onward, upward, undismayed.
Only be worthy ; be thou true ;
The highest, not the low pursue ;
Choose sides, and for thy spirit's health,
Live not in mere pursuit of wealth.
Take thou thy steadfast stand beside
The Righteous One, the Crucified !
In choosing Him thou hast the best ;
Serve Him by serving all the rest ;
Be one of Christ's own noblemen.
God bless thee till we meet again !

A MOTHER TO HER SON.

(Suggested by Ary Scheffer's Painting of Monica and St. Augustine in the Louvre.)

Look up, O son of mine,
To where the clear lights shine,
And thou shalt see

The very face of God.
The heavens with colour glow,
The lights are dim below,
Withdraw thine eyes

From dwelling on the sod.
Choose thou the highest things.
Devotion has strong wings
To bear thee upward,

If thou wouldst arise.
Bravest are they who fight,
Whose souls are in the light,
Whose life is hid with Christ
Beyond the skies.

Let the great crowd go by ;
There is a company
Of spirits royal,

Children of the King :
These are thine equals, seek
For them among the meek,
So, to the pure in heart,
Thy chosen, cling.

Join thou the white-robed host
Who, true at any cost
To God and their best selves,
Follow their Lord ;

For Him they all forsake,
And ever, at daybreak,
They, listening in the silence,
Hear His word.

Belovèd, it is well
That my love should impel
Thy faith to quicken
And thy hope to burn.

Oh, see, as I can see,
The Christ who died for thee,
And then to lower loves
Thou canst not turn.

Be strong, my son, and calm,
Life, like a holy psalm,
Active yet sweet.

May spend itself in praise.
And he will serve man best
Who has a heart at rest,
And loves, and serves,
And worships all his days.

A MINISTER.

My minister has no great name,
But many a lowly care,
No words to charm the multitude,
But power in silent prayer.
She talks about the common things,
Perhaps in common ways ;
I only know the deeds she does
Are lovely past all praise.
You do not see her ministry,
So much is out of sight ;
She comes as quietly almost
As angels do at night.
She wakes the song within my heart,
And bids my thoughts aspire,
While every place becomes a church,
Filled with the heavenly choir.
She preaches to me every day
Sermons that make for peace,
Her doctrines are the gladdest things,
Compelling faith's increase.
They are not lengthy, but they lift
My soul to heights above ;
She has one very favourite text,
It is that " God is love."

The teachings of my minister
Are always for my good ;
She shows new beauty in old truths
I had not understood ;
She leads me forth from darkened ways
Into serener light ;
She does not argue subjects out,
But loves me into right.

You ask who is my minister ?
The one who loves me best,
Whose tender care and charity
Makes work almost like rest,
Who, pure in heart, has seen her God,
Whose eyes with His lights shine—
I hope you have a minister
With power and love like mine.

MICHAEL ANGELO'S FRIEND.

" I do not know how to serve you better than to pray to this sweet Christ for you."—VITTORIA COLONNA TO MICHAEL ANGELO.

WHAT shall I say to him ? He is in night—
A night that has few stars.
Grief, the gaoler, has closed him in,
And his fears are prison-bars.
Oh, giant-souled is this friend of mine,
But his heart is hurt by pain ;
What can I say to make him glad,
And to teach him hope again ?

Too much he cares for the insults flung
By the envy and hate of foes ;
Why have the little such power to rob
The great of his calm repose ?
This friend of mine is in burning fires,
Self-lighted to torture him ;
Oh ! might I comfort this man, whose fame
The years will never dim !

He cannot see that his works are great,
So lowly and meek is he ;
And he does not dream of the love that is his,
Nor the bliss that his might be.
The marks in his brow are deeply cut
By sorrow as well as thought,
Yet I think that the angels themselves must gaze
On the marvels his hand has wrought !
He has painted a picture to be my own,
Of the Christ whom we both love.
Sweet, not terrible, is this face
With the crown of light above.
God gave him to see through the eyes of faith
This holy and loving One.
God bless my friend for the noblest work
That even his hands have done !
He has painted two angels—this on the right
Is fairer than any dream ;
God has inspired him, the light from heaven
Must surely upon him gleam ;
Ah ! Michael Angelo ! work in hope,
As the servant of Jesus may—
The Archangel Michael will give you place
On the right of the Lord one day.
What can I do for him ? Only this
Can a woman do : her love
May bear on its wings her honoured one
To the throne of Christ above,
And He will do what she cannot do
As an answer to her prayer ;
She may be far from her friend in need,
But the Christ is everywhere.
Ah ! Michael Angelo ! I will pray
To this Judge, yet the Friend of us all,
To keep you safe in His heart of love,
And to set you free from thrall ;
To give you the dawn of your longed-for day,
Instead of the shades of night ;
And thus do I serve you best, for I pray
That the Christ may give you light.

UNDER THE WALNUT TREE.

I RUB the leaves as we used to do,
The scented leaves of the walnut tree,
And the fragrance carries me back to you
And the radiant things that we used to see
As we sat together, you and I,
And watched through the walnut boughs the sky.

How young we were in those halcyon days !
Our hearts were as glad as a bird's sweet song,
Our path of life was through meadow ways,
And the brilliant summer days were long,
How tender the twilights used to be,
And the nightingale's song in the walnut tree.

We were most wise in those days of youth,
We could have ordered the world aright !
Brave and valiant were we for truth,
We hated darkness and loved the light ;
And, ah, the dreamings for you and me
In the soft, sweet shade of the walnut tree !

You know it was under the walnut tree
We vowed together to live our best,
Praying the face of our Lord to see,
And work in His service, and know His rest.
And lest I should ever the vow forget,
You gave me a token—I have it yet.

Dear, it was only a few short years
God let us serve Him together here ;
And then, unhindered by prayer and tears,
He took you away to a higher sphere ;
But you had redeemed the promise made
By your brave, true heart in that summer's shade.

Ah ! happy you who have seen the Christ,
And do His service about the throne.
And I ? I am trying to keep my tryst.
And I sing at my work as I wait alone.
While for all that has been, and all to be,
I thank God under the walnut tree.

A FRESCO IN FLORENCE.

In one of the cloisters of Santa Maria Novella is a picture by Giotto of the meeting of Joachin and Anna.

“OH, love, is it thou ? Is it true ? ” she says,
With a sob, half joy, half pain.
“ Is the darkness gone, and the new light come ?
Do I look in thine eyes again ?
Oh, the weary years, and the waiting years,
While we both grew old and sad !
Dear love, it is late, it is late,” she says,
‘ For God to make us glad.’ ”

“ The lonely way through the desert lay,”
He says. “ Love, do not weep ;
We lost each other a weary while,
But I have thee now to keep.
Is it too late to be glad ? ” he says.
“ Dear heart, be calm and strong,
For love is young, though we are old,
And the evening has its song.”

Then the angel comes from the far blue heaven,
And his hand of blessing lays
On the two made gentle and meek and good
By the sorrows of other days.
And he whispers a message that he has brought
Straight from their God above—
“ It is never too late to be glad,” he says,
“ Never too late to love.”

A SUGGESTION.

I CANNOT tell why there should come to me
A thought of someone miles and years away,
In swift insistence on the memory,
Unless there be a need that I should pray.

He goes his way, I mine : we seldom meet
To talk of plans or changes, day by day,
Of pain or pressure, triumph or defeat,
Or special reasons why 'tis time to pray.

We are too busy even to spare thought
For days together of some friends away :
Perhaps God does it for us, and we ought
To read His signal as a call to pray.

Perhaps, just then, my friend has fiercer fight,
A more appalling weakness, a decay
Of courage, darkness, some lost sense of right—
And so, in case he needs my prayer, I pray.

Dear, do the same for me ! If I intrude
Unasked upon you, on some crowded day,
Give me a moment's prayer, as interlude ;
Be very sure I need it, therefore pray.

A PRAYER FOR ALL.

A LITTLE child,
Kneeling at evening prayer.
And bending low
Her head of golden hair.
Knowing how love
Forgave her with a kiss.
Asking for many things,
Asked always this.
Smiling serenely,
Sure of love's reply :
" Kiss me, dear Jesus Christ,
Before I die."

The kiss means pardon.
Will not you and I
Need to implore it
When our night is nigh ?
Much sinning, much forgiven,
Sorry at last
For grieving One who loved us
Through the past.
We may find comfort
In the child's soft cry :
" Lord Jesus, kiss me, too,
Before I die ! "

HOMEWARD.

Through winters and through summers sweet,
By lonely road and crowded street,
With never-resting, rapid feet,
 We travel home.

The hours of every passing day
Bring us good distance on the way,
No hindrance can the march delay,
 We travel home.

The path we take is often fair,
Love's tender music thrills the air,
The smile of God is everywhere,
 As we go home.

But if some grief our joys enshroud,
And if the skies be dark with cloud,
And if the storm-voice thunder loud,
 We travel home.

Some dear companions with us pace
The onward road, and tender grace
Lights for us many a loving face,
 As we go home.

Some comrades have good prizes won,
And some of them we have outrun ;
But some have seen their journey done,
 And hastened home.

We hear glad voices in the night,
We follow in the path of light,
We keep our Father's house in sight,
 And so go home.

The skies are sunny in the West,
Perhaps these evening lights are best ;
We are not far from love and rest,
 And Home, sweet Home !

A BENEDICTION.

THE love of Christ befriend you,
The care of Christ attend you.
Christ have you in His keeping
When all the world is sleeping;
Christ be with you to-morrow
In pleasure or in sorrow;
Christ help you in temptation
And every tribulation;
Christ strengthen you for duty,
Give to your spirit beauty,
And comfort you with gladness
For every hour of sadness;
Christ bid His angels serve you,
And from all ill preserve you;
Christ make you pure and holy,
Christ keep you meek and lowly.
Until with Him in heaven
His crowning grace be given,
The care of Christ defend you,
The love of Christ befriend you.

ONE FAMILY

Did you watch with us when the New Year came,
You, the dear unforgotten, safe at home ?
We watched with you, and thought of you by name,
And wondered were you too far off to come.
And do you mark the years as they go hence ?
And is a century of consequence ?

We were not very far from you that night,
When the stars sang together with the bells,
Heaven smiled on us, and our old world grew white,
The thronged black towns as well as woods and dells.
Men said it was the moonlight, but it seemed
The two worlds were much closer than we dreamed.

What were you doing while we watched and prayed,
Dear well-remembered ones ? Were you within
The Father's House ? Or wandering maffraid
Over the mountains, far from grief and sin ?
How rich you are up there beyond the blue,
Our greatest and our best are all with you.

But there is room for us who tarry yet,
And know not when our eyes may see the King ;
He does not either one of us forget.

And some time o'er the snow His voice will ring,
And we shall know it and be very glad ;
Yet do not think that, waiting, we are sad.

We walk and talk with Him. So gracious He,
That sometimes even by our cottage fires
We lift our eyes the Master's face to see,

And we can tell Him what the heart desires,
And speak of you, and learn in sweet accord
Your joy to be for ever with the Lord.

We are one family, complete in Him

Who gave Himself for us ; and love is strong.
So large our Fatherland the view is dim,

But we can catch the echoes of your song,
And every day the miles become more few,
This century will bring us home to you.

AT THE VERY LAST.

“ARE you afraid?” I asked my friend,
And she answered, “Pray for me :
I am not wholly afraid, but the end
Is like going out to sea.
The waves are dark, and I cannot tell
What the morrow’s dawn may be.”

So I knelt by the bed of my dying friend,
And I prayed, “O Christ, who died,
This friend of mine, who is friend of Thine,
Goes out with the ebbing tide :
She is only a woman, human and weak ;
And we see not the other side.

“Comfort her, Christ, with a gracious word
When she sails away to the West ;
The soul Thou hast summoned goes forth alone,
Be Thou the Guide and the Quest.
If Thou art the Captain the sea is calm,
And the boat is an ark of rest.”

It came to pass that my friend went out
When the night and the morning met,
And she welcomed the Christ with a strange glad joy
That my heart remembers yet ;
And the smile of peace on her face remained
After the sun had set.

And ever since, when at eventide,
I hear the roll of the sea,
And the wonder wakes in my questioning soul,
“That call—has it come to me ?”
I pray, dear Christ, be it soon or late,
Oh, take me away with Thee.

BON VOYAGE.

FAREWELL, farewell! You sail away
To where the lighted homelands are;
Your face is turned to radiant day
From glimmers of the sea and star;
Close the tired eyes until you gain
God's haven, where is no more pain.

The little boat will safely bear,
The sea is quiet in the bay,
Not yours the trouble or the care;
Dear heart, the Boatman knows the way;
Lie still and sleep without a fear,
It is not long, for home is near.

Be not afraid of hurt or loss,
It is a peaceful way you take;
The night will see you safe across,
And when you land the day will break.
Then—ah! the dear ones gone before,
What welcomes wait along the shore!

Farewell! you vanish from my sight,
And into shadow softly glide,
Oh, friend of mine, bound for the light,
They watch you from the other side.
All joy and blessing go with you
Who go to God, farewell, adieu!

SONGS OF LIFE.

Songs of Life.

THE CITY SEA.

“He stilleth the noise of the seas and the tumult of the people.”

THE city is the sea,
Its waves go to and fro,
And the thunder of its waters
Rolls in the depths below.
And night is in its hollow eaves.
And men go down beneath its waves.

The city is the sea,
It has its lightsome mood,
Its days of air and sunshine,
Its sweet May-time of good.
And children dance and men's hearts sing :
Even the sea is touched by spring.

Yet restless is the sea.
Fierce passions stir its deeps,
The storm is in its dreaming
When for a time it sleeps.
Ah, treacherous sea ! the swell beneath
Its surface ealm is often death.

Christ walks upon the sea.
Men shrink away in fear,
“Who is it on the waters ?”
It is a Saviour near.
And when He whispers, “Peace, be still,”
The obedient sea can work no ill.

God of the city sea,
Oh, quell its power of wrong,
Gladden it with Thy sunshine,
And turn its roar to song.
Dear Lord, the city has a soul,
How great it grows in Thy control !

AN OFT-REPEATED PRAYER.

"To the lamb in the desert the sweetest thought is that of the fold."—RUSKIN.

GOOD SHEPHERD, lead me, for I do not know
Where day by day the fresh rich pastures grow,
Nor where the quiet restful waters flow.

Left to myself I wander far astray
Into a desolate and dangerous way,
And solemn night comes after wilful day.

And then in hunger, loneliness, and cold,
I long for some strong hand myself to hold,
And for the peace of the forsaken fold.

I have not always loved Thy staff and rod,
Nor Thy restraints : yet pity me, O God ;
Think of the weary ways that I have trod.

I look abroad for Thee through eyes forlorn,
Out of the thickets of the piercing thorn,
Weary and wounded, terrified and torn.

Strong, tender Shepherd ! Thou at any cost
Wilt bring into Thy calms the tempest-tost,
For Thou didst come to seek and save the lost.

Into the valleys, where the shadows lie,
And where are breathed the prayers of those who die,
The sweet dawn comes when Thou art drawing nigh.

Great Shepherd, take me from the night, the rain,
To discipline, command, compel, restrain,
In the dear safety of the fold again.

And I will no more fret me to be free,
For there Thy rod and staff shall comfort me ;
Let me but dwell within Thy house with Thee.

OUR FATHER CARES.

GIVE me some word to say for Thee,
I prayed. The world needs charity ;
Its sorrows are so great to bear,
And men bow down 'neath loads of care ;
Fain would I bring them some relief
And comfort for their hours of grief.
May I not tell them something ? Go,
A voice replied, and let them know
Their Father loves them.

His blessing touches every head,
He knows the path their tired feet tread.
He pities them when they are sad,
It is His goodwill makes them glad.
Let no one doubt Him ; every child—
The good, the bad, the meek, the wild,
Is to the Father's heart most dear.
He sends His Son to bring them near
Because He loves them.

Receive the good, glad news again,
O heavy-laden sons of men ;
Our Father will your burdens bear,
Our Father will your sorrows share,
Because He loves you. Cold of heart
Are you to others ? Do your part,
And thank Him thus. To your heart take
Earth's sad ones, for your Father's sake,
Because He loves you.

Oh, happy messenger am I !
And ever on the star-lit sky,
And on the white waves of the sea,
As well as where the people be,
The grand, sure truth in lines of light
Is written large in all men's sight.
Let it be passed from age to age,
Though clouds be black and wild storms rage,
God loves the people.

THE AFTERWARDS.

THE kiss of dawn is on the sea :

The early matin-singers rise,
And send their songs up to the skies,
Reaching the heights where I would be.
My day is like the sea. Its face
Is tranquil as a grey-toned lake—
Quiet, eventless, soft with grace.

I know ere night the storms may break.
Yet trustfully I sail away
Toward the East, to meet my day,
And leave the Afterwards with God.

The last glad sound of daytime dies,

Fades from the sea the last red light,
And I go down into the night.

While not a star shines from the skies.
My boat is trembling from its leap
Into the dark. The sea makes moan.
Can it be safe to fall asleep

In this strange darkness and alone ?
But I am tired of life's long quest.
So close my eyes and take my rest,
And leave my Afterwards with God.

HOPE.

HOPE, the artist, doth forbid
Sombre walls in any room ;
If his pictures be half hid
Sometimes by November gloom,
Loving eyes can find them there,
Winsome, bright, and very fair,
Shining through the darkened air.

Hope, the poet, writes good things
Never found in duller prose,
Prophecies of good he brings,
Truly, for this seer knows
How, along the unseen way,
Birds make music, flowers are gay,
And the man takes heart to pray.

Hope, the singer, lifts his voice
Over and above the din,
Then the saddened ones rejoice,
Taking strength and comfort in.
Sobs there were, and bitter tears,
Vain regrets and shrinking fears,
But they pass when Hope appears.

Hope, the angel, gently guides
Through the dark, for he can see
Out to where the stormy tides
And the deeps and quicksands be.
And, behold ! the Father's face,
Full of tender strength and grace,
Smiles all dangers from the place !

Should the lesser blessings go,
Ease and wealth, success and friends,
In the silence thou shalt know
How good Hope can make amends.
He will ever faithful be,
Cheery, helpful, strong and free,
Therefore bind him unto thee.

“ASK WHAT I SHALL GIVE THEE.”

Ask what I will ? So many things
I do ask day by day,
And gently comes the answer back,
But it is often “nay.”

My heart asks rest for weary ones,
And peace instead of strife,
Less of the stress and strain of toil,
And more abundant life,

Health, plenty, riches, full content,
For those whom most I love ;
The best of all the earth can give,
The best of heaven above.

But He, whose love is more than mine,
Gives not what I most crave ;
But gives the bliss that cannot die,
The help that best can save.

Did Jesus mean the word He said,
“ Ask what thou wilt and I
Will give it thee ” ? Ah, wise, strong Friend !
His silence makes reply !

He gives what Love can give : no more,
Nor less, and gives it when
We have grown wise enough to take
His gifts, and only then.

And that is when in lowly trust
The heart prays forth this plea —
“ I know not what is best to ask ;
Decide, O Lord, for me.”

IN THE MORNING.

In the morning, who wakes early
Finds the world prepared for him :
Light of life from out the eastward
Chases all the shadows grim ;
Flowers lift eyes of gladdest welcome,
There are anthems in the breeze,
Merry birds in hawthorn hedges,
Dancing leaves on all the trees.
Then sweet human love makes ready,
And the table is well spread
With the fruits of purest passion,
And the store of living bread ;
And the man prepares for action,
While the sun lights up his way,
And grave Duty on the threshold
Waits to perfect the whole day.

In the daybreak of some morning,
When I wake upon the strand
Of the great mysterious country
Which is yet my Fatherland,
I shall find that all is ready,
And take up my life again,
With no break except the sleep time,
And no loss except of pain.
I shall read the signs of welcome
In all new things I may see,
And, perhaps, familiar faces,
In the place reserved for me :
I shall greet my old friend Duty
In whatever change of guise—
When at last I see my Saviour
In His home beyond the skies.

WHY?

Why carry thine own burden
Day by day ?
Why through the thickest shadows
Take thy way ?
A Saviour is beside thee,
A loving Friend would guide thee ;
Therefore, pray.

Why art thou made so hopeless
By thy sin ?
The Lamb of God has borne it :
Let Him win
Thy faith in His salvation,
Thy trust in His oblation,
Peace within.

Why are the days so shadowed
By thy care ?
Why do thy fears pursue thee
Everywhere ?
The dread of each to-morrow
The pressure of all sorrow,
Let Christ bear.

Why art thou so forgetful
Of His might ?
Hast thou not learnt love's lesson
Of delight ?
Thy sin and care and sadness
Will vanish in the gladness
Of His light.

THE GREATEST OF THESE.

Look not thou dimly through hot tears
Down the dark vistas of the years,
Nor break thy heart with weary sighs
For all that dies !
But turn thy back upon the night :
Thou hast three friends, with faces bright,
Who yet shall lead thee into light.

Some needs must go. Speak thy farewell
To him who, in his hermit cell,
Searches the depths for mysteries
And prophecies.

Nor cling to him who gives thee pain
With showers of words that beat like rain.
Dismiss him. Better friends remain.

Walk by his side, whose brow, thought-lined,
Bends to thee ever, sternly kind,
Things wonderful has he to show
And make thee know.

But Knowledge, though he lead thee far,
From height to height, and star to star,
Is not thy friend, as others are.

They shall all vanish—these abide.
Faith, lofty-browed and eagle-eyed,
Looks into the invisible

Where deep things dwell.
Open thy heart, and give her place !
Faith sees, through mists, God's shining face,
And crowns thee with an angel's grace.

And Hope, fair Hope, has ever been
A comforter, with voice serene,
Who holds thee close, and in the storm
Keeps thy heart warm.

Wouldst thou be strong, and brave, and free ?
In weal or woe keep her with thee,
The very light of day is she !

But greatest, loveliest of the three,
Is tender, grand-eyed Charity.
The heart that finds her ends its quest
In perfect rest.

Oh ! hold her, keep her in thy care,
For earth, like heaven, is rich and fair,
If Love be with thee everywhere.

COMPANIONS.

My care
Goes with me everywhere,
The broken lights upon the sea,
The star lamps shining lustrously,
God's great white world of field and moor,
The lofty cliffs that guard the shore—
I turn from all to meet the face
Of one who shows me little grace,
For care
Is with me everywhere.

And pain,
A guest that will remain,
Sits with me in the house at night,
And comes to me with morning light,
Making a home within my breast,
And stays my work, and breaks my rest,
And makes me weary vigils keep,
Nor lets me for my sowing reap,
For pain
Sleeps but to wake again.

But hope
Helps me with these to cope,
And cheery comrades fair to see,
And strong to comfort, live with me :
Faith bears me upward on its wing
And sings to me until I sing :
Peace touches me with tender grace,
And bids pain take a lower place :

While Love
Stays on and will not move.

And One
Whose light is as the sun,
Whose pity never comes too late,
Whose pardon, like Himself, is great,
Knows me unworthy, yet no less
Lingers in His sweet gentleness—

Jesus, my Saviour, takes my care,
And He is with me everywhere,
For He
In life and death abides with me.

THE PATIENCE OF HOPE.

OH! sad heart, waken hope again;
Nor fear to walk through darkening ways;
Some tender lights do still remain
To mingle with November greys,
And cheer these too pathetic days.

Nature will never teach despair.
Look at the old gold on the trees,
And dream of young leaves shimmering there,
And listen to the vigorous breeze.
It tells of better days than these.

Winter is linked fast to the spring.
Nor storm, nor calm, nor frost, nor snow
Can long delay the angel's wing
That bears God's blessings to and fro—
How surely, swiftly, thou shalt know.

Beneath the heaps of faded leaves
The next year's crocuses grow strong,
The robin sings where stood the sheaves,
The blackbird has commenced his song.
Hope lights the dark ways all along.

Do thou but wait God's little while,
And all these clouds shall clear away,
The child shall see the Father's smile
That was but hidden for a day,
And praise where now he can but pray.

Summon thy courage. Test thy strength,
Let faith bring patience for its pain.
Rest, peace and joy shall come at length,
And these are guests that will remain.
Oh! sad heart, waken hope again!

MORNING PERILS.

"Cause me to hear Thy loving-kindness in the morning."

A DANGEROUS time is the morning !
There is nothing to fear at night ;
Cal'm are the eyes in closing,
Tired of the urgent light ;
The body is healed in sleeping,
Trouble and labour cease,
The soul is in God's safe keeping,
The heart is in perfect peace.

But who can say in the morning
How fierce will the trials be ?
What difficult paths may be trodden,
What griefs may encompass me ?
The great, wide world is sunlit ;
But I see not an hour before
What new, strange sorrows or dangers
The future may have in store.

Oh, speak to me in the morning,
Lord of my every day !
Thou art my great Director
As I pass to the hidden way :
If I hear Thy voice in the morning
I open the day with song,
Forth shall I go to conquer,
Thy presence shall make me strong.

I think of another morning
After a long, long sleep —
But why should I fear the awaking
Since Thou wilt my spirit keep ?
Oh, speak to me in that morning,
Jesus, in Thy sweet grace,
And I shall have found my heaven
In the light of my Saviour's face.

May there be no cloud on that morning :
The clouds are for mornings here :
In the brightness of that great glory
All darkness will disappear.
O sunrise that has no setting,
O day of supreme delight—
God give me the joy of that morning
After a restful night.

TEACH ME THY WAY.

THE dark comes down ere it be late :
I stand amid the shades and wait,
Not knowing whether left or right
Will bring me to the open gate
Where I can pass to home and light.
O God, with whom is endless day,
Guide Thou my steps : teach me Thy way.
I am alone. But, onward borne,
With weary feet, and banners torn,
What hosts have travelled where I go.
Laden and lonely, weak and worn,
Whom Thou hast made Thy will to know !
Lord, be thus merciful to me ;
For as they cried, I cry to Thee.
Bid the light shine ; and call me where
Thy presence fills the strengthening air,
And wisdom, justice, love, and peace
Make all Thy world serene and fair,
And righteousness and joy increase.
This is the goal. But far I stray :
Oh, bring me back. Teach me Thy way.
The distant lights like beacons shine :
The city they illumine is mine :
The friends I love are gathered there.
Give me Thy help, O Guide Divine,
For hope and faith are in my prayer ;
And morn will break, and I shall stand
At daybreak in my Fatherland.

SONGS OF OUT-OF-DOORS.



Songs of Out-of-Doors.

THE SABBATH OF THE YEAR.

MOTHER NATURE has put to sleep
All her little ones snug and warm.
Old Nurse Earth will the children keep
Tucked in carefully out of the storm ;
Rocked a little by winter wind,
Washed by rains that were always kind,
They were ready for anything—
Even to sleep till awoke by Spring.

Nature, the mother, has told the trees
That this is the time for the Sabbath rest :
The green grass whispers it in the breeze.
And in all the fields it is manifest.
And, ah ! the long sleep under the snow,
And the plants too sleepy to stretch and grow.
And the cosy coverlet over all,
Till the March sun shines and the throistles call.

Low are the psalms of the woodland aisles,
Soft are the airs which are played to-day :
The skies are tender with quiet smiles,
But the glow comes with the flowers of May.
And all the works of the summer days,
Glad with beauty and sweet with praise,
Will be done by Earth at her very best,
Because of the calm of this Sabbath rest.

FIRST FLOWERS.

Said the Spring to the sleeping plants one day,
When the fresh winds blew from the sea,
"Who will go forth to the waiting world
And prepare my way for me?"

The crocuses lifted their yellow lights,
While the snowdrops' heads were bent,
The bright Lent lilies came in crowds,
And the violets shed their scent.

The daisies opened their eyes to see
If the skies were blue above,
And a flower host whispered under the earth,
"Send me, send me, for love."

But the brave old gorse waved a flag of gold
Aloft on the mountain-side,
And flashed the news of the coming joy
To the whole land far and wide.

"My lamp has been burning through all the dark
To lighten her way," he said,
"And a crown has been ready at any time
To circle my fair queen's head."

So the Spring came first to the rugged gorse,
"For you are my friend most dear,"
She said as she kissed him, "because you keep
The thought of me all the year."

A ROBIN'S SONG.

A ROBIN comes and sings to me
Matins and evensong ;
My little garden is a church
Open the whole day long,
And God is worshipped day and night
In gladdest, happiest ways,
While he comes in and lifts his voice
In psalms and hymns of praise.
No winter forecasts trouble him,
The fewer lighted hours,
The silences of other birds,
The fading of the flowers.
He takes the seasons as they come,
In loyal love and trust,
And in the shadow or the sun
He sings because he must.
I go to church sometimes with him,
And if I cannot sing
I say " Amen " to all he does,
My bird of folded wing.
My cares are many more than his,
Yet have I, too, no days
In which it is not very good
To trust, and give God praise.

MARCH VIOLETS.

WHO forgets
March violets ?
Not the wild winds at their play
On the glad spring holiday,
For they stoop to snatch the sweets
From the lowliest retreats,
And with rollicking intent
Steal and bear away the scent.
There is no wind that forgets
March violets.

Who forgets

March violets ?

Not the children. How they shout
When they seek and find them out
By their tell-tale fragrance ! Then,
Filling chubby hands again
With the treasures of the spring,
They are proud as any king.
Not a boy or girl forgets
March violets.

Who forgets

March violets ?

Not the lovers. In the dale
Violets tell so sweet a tale
That two heads bend low to listen,
And fond eyes with pleasure glisten,
For the world is full of love
When the skies are blue above.
No fond lover e'er forgets
March violets.

Who forgets

March violets ?

Not the old folks, who remember
In the time of their December
All the thrill of life's glad Spring
At the violets' blossoming !
Like an unforgotten kiss
They tell tales of youth and bliss.
No one who has loved forgets
March violets.

Who forgets

March violets ?

Not the God who made them. He
Looks His little flowers to see,
Gives them sunshine, air, and rain,
Blesses them, to bless again
As He blesses us, who share
All the Father's love and care.
Not a year that God forgets
March violets.

RENEWAL.

SEE ! the world has grown young again,
Love has kissed her, and she forgets
All her sorrows of age and pain,
Struggles and losses and sad regrets :
Love has clothed her in silver sheen
Till the grey old world like a bride is seen.

She is beloved by all glad young things,
Therefore can she her own youth keep ;
Faithful lovers of feathers and wings
Fan her gently, and sing her to sleep,
Wake her again with a kiss and a song,
Cheer her with music the whole day long.

All the trees have their tribute paid.
Apples, pears, cherries scatter their blooms.
There are summer showers of snow in the glade,
And golden lights have banished the glooms.
Oaks, elms, beeches, in glad array,
Are lovely as dreams when the world has May.

But the young free flowers make the old world blest,
Golden crowns they make for her head,
At her feet they scatter their very best,
Carpets of beauty for her to tread :
And the world laughs out in her grateful glee,
“ Am I old, since God giveth such love to me ? ”

We, too, rejoice with the joy of earth,
Spring's renewal can make us glad :
We praise the Lord in our psalms of mirth,
With the happy world in her new robes clad ;
Our hearts have earnest of joys above,
We have our summer if we have love.

MAY.

MAY comes carolling up through the meadows,
Soft are the sounds of her dancing feet,
She has a lover the whole world over,
Who laughs for joy that she is so sweet.
Golden buttercups, purple anemones,
Primrose acres, hyacinth beds,
All the land is alive with gladness
When May is the bride whom Old England weds.
The home of May is in hearts with stories,
Many a tender truth she knows,
And aids the telling, for sweet May glories
In song and sunshine after the snows.
That which she is she is making others,
Merry with thankfulness, glad with love,
There is new hope in the streets of cities
When the skies of May are blue above.
God be thanked for our queen of pleasure !
Let peace and plenty with May be given,
And, aye, for the days of the golden leisure,
When earth draws nearer to God and heaven.
Welcome ! Welcome bringer of blessing ;
Dancing children, and old men grey
Rejoice and sing ; for the earth is heaven
In the winsome days of the merry May.

THE FORMING OF THE FRUIT.

WE have seen the summer snow,
And the fading of the glow
Of the early apple-blossoms
That were carried by the breeze,
We have changed spring's vanishing
For the summer's plenishing,
Orchards now are not flower-gardens,
But the homes of fruitful trees.

What a duty-loving host
Are the things we love the most !
After clouds and storms of winter
They were bidden to be gay,
But they let the blossoms fade,
And were glad and unafraid
When their flowery-times were ended
With the passing of the May.

Now how silently they grow !
Every tree and plant must know
How success attends endeavour
In the nurture of the fruit :
Light and sunshine, rain and air,
Take the young life in their eare,
And the trees and plants are happy,
Twig and bough, and stem and root.

Little hard things, green and sour,
They have yet the growing power,
They will gain in size and beauty
Toward perfection every day :
Rich and ripe, they will fulfil
To the end their Maker's will,
And the orchards will be lovely
Though the flowers have died away.

We must also bloom and fade,
But the fruitage shall be made
All the richer for the passing
Spring and summer of our days.
Rain and air, and the hot sun,
Do but give us harvests won,
And the Gardener shall gather
Fruit and beauty to His praise.

A LITTLE STREAM.

I AM no river to carry goods,
I only wander among the woods ;
Men try to use all things, but not me,
I dance along burdenless down to the sea,
And only the bird or the butterfly
Cares to come and linger where I pass by,
For they are of no more use than I.

I have great fun with the stones and rocks,
Caressing them, washing them, giving them shocks ;
A thousand birds come down to my brink,
And I give them the best old wine to drink ;
And the ferns and the mosses press as near
As they possibly can to my waters clear,
So I know that some things hold me dear.

All day and all night, in the sun and the breeze,
I nourish the roots of the growing trees ;
The oak, the holly, the beech, and the ash
Stretch out or creep, till they feel my splash ;
I nurse them, play with them, make them strong,
And when I sing, as I flow along,
The trees, if none other, applaud my song.

Some rivers serve towns, as they pass them by ;
I cannot do it, nor care to try ;
Such works and missions are not for me,
So I run as fast as I can to the sea.
Why should I sigh to be as they ?
I have nothing to do all the merry day
But sing and scamper and laugh and play !

Do you think that I ought to be still and sad ?
That the workers alone have the right to be glad ?
Do you ever feel you are useless too,
Since what others are doing you cannot do ?
Be bright and happy, and never mind !
The great God made us, and He is kind,
And there's good in us all for Him to find.

THE RIVER.

THE Earth-mother hid it away at first,
And cherished, and made it strong,
Then sent it into the great hot world
And, bidding it flow along,
Gave it lessons in usefulness,
And taught it a pleasant song.

So it sped away through a self-made path
Over the mountain slope,
And rested not in its rocky bed,
But, eager and brave through hope,
It hurried forth ; for it purposed well
With the thirst of the earth to cope.

It kissed into life as it went along
Bracken and flower and fern ;
It stole so secretly under the green
That the eyes could scarce discern,
But the living things beside it blessed
The touch of the merry " burn."

It was so happy that, presently,
Hearing its cheery thrill,
There came to deepen and broaden it
Many another rill ;
And the meeting and mingling waters made
A River below the hill.

Then men beside it planted their towns,
And drank of its waters clear,
And the villages crept through the trees to be
To the life-giving River near,
And children came to play on its banks,
And old men held it dear.

It cleansed the cities, and worked their mills,
And safely it kept afloat
For the growing need of a multitude
Many a food-filled boat,
And the generous River of blessings gave
Too many to heed or note.

And then more stately and calm it grew,
As a heart at peace can be,
Quiet and gladdened with memories
It met the expectant sea,
And flowed, as a good life flows through Time
To the main of Eternity '

MY GARDEN.

My garden is an ample one,
And everything that grows
Thrives at its best on my estate,
From cedar-tree to rose ;
All lovely things which God has made
Find in it air and room,
There is no time of all the year
When some flowers do not bloom.
My garden has its lights and shades,
Its valleys and its hills ;
Part is laid out in terraces,
And part by singing rills.
And it has even space enough
For orchards, meadows, fields,
And every single foot of it
Pleasure and profit yields.
It stretches north, it stretches south,
And whether east or west
Delights me more I cannot say,
For each part seems the best ;
And whether most I love to see
Heather or violet,
Or stalwart oak, or graceful birch,
Is not decided yet.
Parts of my large estate thrive best
Untended and unspoiled,
But some most fertile are, because
Wise men for years have toiled.
It takes a host of gardeners
To keep my garden tilled,
But I have none of them to pay—
So the great Gardener willed.

We cannot gather half the fruit
That in my garden grows—
The strawberries and raspberries,
The bilberries and sloes,
The nuts and generous blackberries—
Ah, what a harvest treat
The children of the towns might have
If they could come and eat !

My garden is so beautiful,
That when I walk in it
I sometimes fancy it almost
For heaven itself is fit !
Thank God this goodly heritage
Of His is really mine ;
And yet I thank Him most of all
That it is also thine !

A SONG OF THE WATERS.

THE waters keep mad carnival. To-day
They hold a *fête*, and merrily they play
About the rocks, leaping above their heads,
As if to live were only to be glad.
The fountains of white spray catch from the sun
Its silvery beauty ; and the drops are gems
Too bright to waste in wearing, but to shine
For God to see.

The waters are in love !
They throw caressing arms about the rocks,
They speak in gentle whispers to the birds,
They run with blessings to the great green earth,
And touch the white, worn faces of tired men
With tenderness, as if they pitied them
For all their sins and sorrows, and would fain
Bring them refreshment. Sometimes they are fierce,
To-day they are all gentle as a lamb,
And kindness itself ; and sing soft songs,
As if to woo the weary world to sleep.

The waters are at prayer. Do they repent
Of all the cruel deeds that they have done,
And ask to be forgiven? Yet, is it prayer?
Nay, it is praise. "Glory to God!" they cry.
"He is our Maker and Controller! He
Blesses all things that He has made! Be glad,
O hearts of men, and sing His praises too!"

THE CORN.

RAINS have watered it, dews have kissed it,
Blessings of breezes have cheered it ever,
All things smile on it, all things love it,
The good corn-food that will fail us never.
Every morning the larks sang over it,
"Corn, grow higher, come nearer heaven";
Every evening the soft clouds covered it,
Every night was some impulse given.
Little children, with eyes of wonder,
Have peered amongst it, its wealth to see:
"Up to our knees, above our shoulders,
How much faster it grows than we!"
Weary dwellers in crowded cities
Have dreamed of its wavings before the breeze:
"Oh, to look at its stately beauty
From some cool couch under shady trees!"
It has grown on in its quiet stateliness,
Blessed of the heart, unhelped by hands,
Until, with beneficent golden plenty,
It crowns and covers our English lands.
Now for the sound of the merry sickle
In the cool grey morning before men roam,
And the gladder sound of the grateful singers
Joining the chorus of Harvest Home.
Now for the folding of hands in thankfulness,
God has heeded the prayer we said;
Happy are we, for the gracious Father
Will each day give us our daily bread.

PLAYTIME.

A BEAUTIFUL world
Of fern and heather,
Skies that are cloudless,
Seas that are blue.
Who wants to work
In this perfect weather ?
Let us make holiday,
I and you.

Even the cliffs
Wear smiles on their faces,
The rolling ocean
Laughs out in play,
The white waves dance
Into pleasant places—
Why should we labour
More than they ?

The playtime this
Of the merry season,
Between the harvests
Of hay and corn ;
And plentiful fruits
Give the earth a reason
Why joy should awaken
When day is born.

God smiles upon us,
And all things love us—
Trees in the forests,
Stars in the sky.
Friends are beside us,
And God is above us—
Let us keep holiday,
You and I.

THE WIND BLOWS IN FROM THE SEA.

THIS is as blithe as a midsummer day,
Or an hour in spring that can have its fill
Of exquisite pleasures and glad refrains :
It is wild with delights that throb and thrill ;
The billows are bounding for very joy,
The flowing waves sing a song of glee,
Sunbeams merrily dance and play,
And the wind blows in from the sea.

Bountiful blessings the brave wind brings
O'er leagues of water and flashing foam ;
Man often wonders what angel it is
That fans his face and sweetens his home.
It travels afar to the crowded towns,
And weary workers grow strong and free,
For weakness passes and strength returns
When the wind blows in from the sea.

The boats are out, and the fisher fleets
Are skimming the waters in the bay ;
And ah ! it is well for the wives of men,
And the little children are glad at play,
When the boats are turned to the landward lights,
And thought sees the home, where the men would be ;
The sails are spread to the helpful breeze,
And the wind blows in from the sea.

When I am out on the ocean wild,
And the home I long for is hard to gain ;
When the summer sunshine has passed to night,
And life is a winter of storm and rain ;
When the dark spreads over my trackless way,
And far is the haven where I would be,
God grant that the billows may speed me home,
And the wind blow in from the sea.

A SUMMER SHOWER.

THE earth was loved too fervently : the sun
Pressed burning kisses on her upturned face,
Till she grew weary, though 'twas only noon ;
The earth was dry, and all the gifts she held
And nourished served to drain the life from her,
Her children were so many : the green grass
Turned white and faint ; the great corn family
In all its vigorous life was much athirst ;
The ripening fruits lifted their rosy lips
For water, the sweet flowers held down their heads,
And the trees whispered of their common need.
The brave earth did her best for all of them,
But she herself was spent in the fierce heat,
And could but teach them patience languidly.

But then a wave of pity swept the skies :
A great black host came up against the sun,
Steadily, slowly, till at last it passed
Between him and the earth. Next the soft clouds
Melted in blessing drops. Ample and swift
Was the refreshment brought to the faint earth,
And all her children. Rosy lips and white
Drank eagerly alike. A million plants
In every field, and every famished wood,
Received new life and health ; and a great hush
Of grateful happiness gave thanks to God,
While the glad earth looked up with smiling eyes
To tell the sun that rest is more than joy.

A PARABLE.

IN a large field, where grass was green,
And soil was deep, and space was wide,
A little stunted tree was seen
With nothing by its side.

It seemed to have great Nature's wealth
All to itself, this little tree ;
None shared its riches or its health,
Or sought its company.

For it moons shone, and showers were soft,
Earth made food ready for its mouth,
The kind sun beckoned it aloft,
Winds kissed it from the South.

None begged of it for love or pelf,
None craved its service soon or late ;
It grew as if to please itself
In solitary state.

And yet it was the puniest thing
That ever called itself a tree,
And lived, for all its plenishing,
A life of poverty.

Unsightly, prematurely old,
It met, at last, the planter's eyes,
And he could read the tale it told,
For love had made him wise.

He planted round the mournful tree
A group of saplings, strong and fair,
A young and merry company,
In all its wealth to share.

They laughed and danced, they stretched and throve,
And tales were whispered in sweet song,
Until the old tree learned to love,
And so grew glad and strong.

And it was rich, although it gave,
With generous joy and social grace,
Whate'er the other trees might crave
Of succour, food, or space.

And when the planter came to see,
Behold, the scene was fair as May :
The trees were lovely, and this tree
As beautiful as they !

AT CHURCH IN THE OPEN.

ALL Thy works praise Thee, O Lord,
Trees and waters chant Thy name,
Rocks and mountains Thy great word
In harmonious song proclaim ;
And I come to worship Thee.
Lord, reveal Thyself to me.

Make Thy chosen people glad,
Peace in our time grant, O Lord,
Be Thy priests in white robes clad,
And, according to Thy word,
To the truly penitent
Be the absolution sent.

Lord, my kindred worship Thee,
As on every Sabbath day ;
Let them all Thy glory see,
But forget not me, away
From the old familiar place ;
Let me also share Thy grace.

Here I wait in Thy green aisles,
While Thy choristers declare
How the great world shares Thy smiles,
And Thou hearest every prayer ;
Speak to me by tree and fern
Until I Thy precepts learn.

Preachers on these flower-clad slopes
Tell me that I want to know ;
Upward draw my thoughts and hopes
That my heart may find God so ;
Seeking things that are above,
Wholly satisfied with love.

May my Sabbath service rise
From this church of birds and flowers
Higher than the deep-blue skies,
And these consecrated hours
Be to me a fount of strength
When my work-day dawns at length.

THE COOL OF THE DAY.

COME out, O gentle stars,
In the grey sky :
Wake, healing winds, and let
The great heat die.

GIVE to the world, O night,
What it loves best :
Thy kiss at eventide,
And then sweet rest.

Whispers among the trees,
Sighs in the corn.
And then deep silences
Before the morn.

These comfort weary heads,
And eyes that weep,
And hush the throbbing heart
To tranquil sleep.

Therefore, O day, be kind,
And pass away,
With kindly cooling touch
For all who pray.

And Thou, O gracious God,
In pardoning love,
Lift up my soul to Thee
And things above.

Dear Father, speak to me,
Bid trouble cease,
Give me for Thy good-night
Thy gift of peace.

“NO MORE SEA.”

WHEN days were long and nights were white,
And all things panted with the heat,
And shadeless glare was in the street,
And the head ached with too much light,
Then with a sigh you sometimes said,
“Oh for the breezy sea instead !”

Through snatches of glad holidays,
When skies were blue and seas were calm,
And softly sang the waves a psalm,
And every sound was sweet with praise,
You thought, while resting on the shore,
“Would this might last for evermore !”

But when the storm-wind swept in wrath
Across the waters, till they rose
Like mighty armies of grim foes,
To sweep opponents from their path,
You learnt how good the truth can be,
“In heaven there is no more sea.”

God’s “No more sea” means no more care,
No more suspense, and no more tears,
No growing older with the years,
Or sadder with the need of prayer ;
It means no sorrow nor decay,
Since former things have passed away.

No more the waters that divide
Hearts that would fain be always near,
No pain for those we hold most dear,
No shrinking from the rising tide,
No fear nor grief nor pain shall be
When you are where is no more sea.

There is a river whose cool streams
Make glad the city of our God,
And weary feet that earth have trod
Are resting where that water gleams ;
God guide in safety you and me
To that dear land of no more sea.

THE LINGERING SUMMER.

"ONE more kiss before we part,"
Said the Summer to the Earth ;
"Thy next lover will be stern,
Plenty will give place to dearth.
Cold his smiles, but mine are loving,
Hold me closely to thine heart,
We have both been glad together,
One more kiss before we part."

The Earth lifted a warm face,
Saying, "Do not leave me yet,
Love like ours should burn and last,
'Tis not easy to forget !
The embraces of the winter
Are not what my heart desires ;
Stay with me, untired, my lover,
Light for me the sunset fires."

Then the Summer laughed aloud,
With a merry, well-pleased shout,
And the flowers blazed forth anew,
And the birds again sang out.
All the trees put on new colours,
All the grass was vivid green :
"Our last days shall be our best days,"
Summer said to the Earth Queen.

Ah ! the feast of beauty spread
Like a banquet everywhere ;
Blessings brightened ; the short days
Were most bounteously fair ;
And the Summer, smiling, said :
"We are glad though death be nigh ;
Love lasts on though life be faint ;
All best things can never die !"

CUT CORN.

Poor fields so plundered,
Late wealthy with gold !
Poor smitten corn,
Grown suddenly old !
Where is their beauty ?
Ruthlessly slain :
Low on the earth
Lie the fair heads of grain.

Tall, bright and graceful
The corn yesterday,
Now it is borne
From its birthplace away.
Yet are no mourners,
For nobody grieves ;
Songs, and not tears,
Are for harvests of sheaves.

Ah, it is better
To die for men's aid
Than to smile and look lovely
In forest or glade.
Not beauty, but usefulness,
Reaches God's test ;
The fields are for harvests,
And cut corn is best.

A LESSON FROM THE BECK.

THE little beck runs singing to the sea,
Wooded by the welcome chorus of the waves,
But casts a helpful shower of blessing forth
On golden rod and bramble, which peep down
And nod their glad "*bon voyage*" in return.
But why such haste ? I ask the rushing beck,
Why run away and lose thy little self
In the great waters of the plenteous sea,
Which does not need the sacrifice ?

The beek

Laughs merrily, and does not stay its course,
But sings to me a little, pleasant song
Of joyous service, all for love's own sake,
And tells me, what I might have known before,
That he who loses life gains fuller life,
Who blesses never lacks the power to bless,
And who gives all has something left to give.

SEPTEMBER.

Who dare call Queen September old ?

Her face is fair.

She does not stoop, she is not cold,

But debonair.

She claims, 'tis true, a longer night

For rest and sleep,

Nor will she, who respects her sight,

Late vigils keep.

But her blue eyes are clear as youth

When day returns,

And her cheek glows with love and truth

When evening burns.

Rich, jovial, clothed in gayest dress,

She spends the day,

And, with large-hearted lavishness,

She gives away

Gold for the gleaner, for the thrush

Harvests of food,

And for world-weary men the hush

Of quiet wood.

She cares for children in her prime,

And with them plays

The merry games of nutting time

On royal days.

Yet wears her golden crown of state

On brow serene,

And bears herself erect, elate,

A charming Queen !

BLACKBERRIES.

AN ! the joy of the blackberry bushes
Scrambling over the hedges and banks !
A psalm is sung through the autumn glory
Thrilling with beauty, giving God thanks.
This is the fruit-harvest, free for the garnering.
Ready and ripe for the children's hands ;
Hurrah for the days that are bright and merry !
Come out from the cities and over the lands.

The scarlet haws are alive on the hedges,
Each acorn is filling its chaste, traced cup ;
Red hips have taken the place of the roses,
The forests are lifting their treasures up.
In the golden gleam of the wild crab apples,
In the purple bloom of damson and sloe,
In the plentiful, generous, free blackberries,
The harvest joy is for all to know.

What fun and frolic—do you remember ?—
We had with the berries when we were young ;
When prophecies shone in the distant landscapes,
And love was a dream and its songs unsung !
Now the distances lie behind us,
Our feet have traversed much of the way,
But never was autumn more fair and peaceful,
Nor blackberries lovelier than to-day.

Cheery lessons of faith and fealty
Come to all through blackberry vines ;
God seems the nearer, His love more gracious,
When summer is gone and the year declines.
Who is afraid of the storm and tempest ?
This is the season for trust and thanks ;
And hey ! for the joy of the bonnie blackberries
And the glory of God on hedges and banks !

IN WINTER.

THE gorse is golden on the hill,
In sheltered spots are violets,
And I can see on grassy slopes
The daisies, with their eyes like hopes,
To chide the spirit that forgets,
Because it is mid-winter still.

In some sweet places of our land
There never is a barren time,
In hidden nooks the flowers grow,
Unkilled by winds, unhurt by snow,
And birds and trees like some sweet chime
Make even slow hearts understand.

And never is so sad a day
That grief is present everywhere ;
God's mercy is a constant thing
In winter always as in spring,
And no one's life is full of care,
For love and goodness ever stay.

So look for blessing yet again !
The clouds awhile may hide the sun,
But lovely things do not depart
From any day. Therefore take heart:
The spring through winter shall be won,
And joy shall follow nights of pain.

SONGS OF EXPERIENCE.

Songs of Experience.

WHAT IS IT ?

IN the fairest of our weather,
'Mid the braeken and the heather,
When the fields are white for harvest
And fair Nature seems most glad,
Is it something we inherit ?
Some dark shadow of the spirit
That comes over us so often
With the power to make us sad ?

It is not that life is dreary,
Nor that pain has made us weary,
For we all have friends to love us,
And some comfort, and some health,
And the light of home shines ever,
And delight attends endeavour.
Then why does sorrow reach us,
And joy pass as if by stealth ?

Ah ! the soul that is immortal
Soars perhaps to heaven's portal
Through the beautiful in Nature,
And it hungers all the more
For the good that is undying,
And a love all-satisfying ;
Because through lights and sunsets
It can see that open door.

Oh ! be sure if love and duty,
And the joy of summer beauty,
And the gladness of the child-heart
That knows itself forgiven
Cannot chase away all sorrow,
It will vanish with the morrow,
For 'tis but the spirit's longing
After God, and home, and heaven.

TESTIMONY.

"Return to thine own house and show how great things God hath done unto thee."—JESUS.

"Go, tell thy friends," the Master said.

My longing was to stay
In the new heaven of His peace,
And watch my Lord alway ;
But He commands me to proclaim
A Gospel of glad news ;
To my own people am I sent,
And how could Love refuse ?

And this is what the Lord has done
In His strange love of me :
The evil spirits He cast out,
He healed me, set me free :
He touched my heart and made it strong,
With rhythmic joy to beat,
He laid His hand upon my head,
And all my thoughts grew sweet.

This, too, is what my Lord has done :
He saw my mad, fierce sin,
And cleansed me from it wondrously,
Making me clean within.
I am a child, born to new life,
Redeemed, restored, forgiven ;
Henceforth I walk through ways of peace,
To light, and home, and heaven.

For I have seen the Lord. My eyes
Have gazed into His face.
And oh ! my people, if you knew
The wonder of His grace !
Who has once felt His touch of love
Can never be the same :
Life broadens into perfectness
By power of His great name.

Oh, let me take you to my Lord !
The way is never long.
The very skies look down and smile,
The winds sing hope's glad song ;

And when He looks at you and speaks,
Sorrow is not, nor care ;
All the world's sin is borne away,
And heaven is everywhere.

NOT FOR ME.

BLESSINGS I cannot count, a host,
About my path I see ;
Yet some things that I wish for most
Are not for me.

Shall I, then, sigh away my days
In fretful discontent ?
Nay, but resigned in happy praise
Shall they be spent.

Youth's vivid hopes and thrilling dreams
Its springtide and its glee,
Its merry mounts, and rushing streams,
Are not for me.

But I will love the quiet vales
And slopes of sunny lands,
And to the duty that prevails
Will put my hands.

Wealth brings no treasures to my feet
For me to use and give ;
But air and light and flowers are sweet
For those who live.

And fame and influence and power,
High service, noble deeds,
Are not for me ; yet I each hour
Can sow good seeds.

And while strong faith and love are mine,
To God I leave the rest ;
He chooses where His light shall shine,
And He knows best.

WHAT TIME I AM AFRAID.

Now the mysteries of life
Gather round me ;
Now its problems are unsolved,
And confound me ;
Now I am but like a child,
And the mountain way is wild :
But what time I am afraid
I will trust.

God, whose mighty love is strong
For me ever ;
Christ, with pity watching still
My endeavour :
I am very much afraid ;
Hasten, therefore, to my aid ;
Strengthen, quiet, succour me,
Trusting Thee.

“ BE NOT ANXIOUS.”

As one who hears the trains at night
Go thundering outward through the air,
Yet, undisturbed, dreams on because
Driver and pointsman know the laws,
And, dark or light, will do the right,
Not his but theirs the care,—

So do thou take thy rest and sleep ;
The world's great load is not for thee,
Not thine to start the trains of life,
Or choose for men, or quell their strife :
The Father will His children keep,
Trust Him, and happy be.

A GREY DAY BY THE SEA.

THERE are no colours like these silver greys,
Nor days so lovely as these grey days are !
The sea and sky mingle in close embrace,
Tender as passion could not be, and soft
As tranquil love, so strong it casts out fear.
The gentle waves creep slowly to the shore
With low-voiced greetings that are scarcely heard
Above a whisper ; all the winds are faint
Since they have lost their power of buffeting,
And do not dare intrude with any force
Upon the notice of a world at rest.
The mountains are all veiled in soft-hued mists,
And the bare cliffs put dresses on to hide
Their rugged outlines. There is mystery
In every wood ; and the long shore of sand
Is but a path that leads to silent ways
Where hidden secrets are. This deep repose,
In which all Nature lies, is like the rest
Of God's first Sabbath, and the waiting world,
Expectant, hushes all its eagerness,
And is content to live, and leave all else
To God.

I love, indeed, all sunny days,
But dearer than the brilliance and the glare
Is this soft greyness, which enfolds the world
And fills me with the restfulness of love.
And the near presence, and the still small voice
Of Him who comes to me in these soft calms
As never in the noises of the world.

AN OVERHEARD SERMON.

“YES, if we cared to take it, they would give
In any of their churches for one night
A seat, nor charge till the collection came ;
But I can preach to you here in the street
A better sermon than the best of them,
And give you a text too. Chapter and verse ?
I am not sure, but look it out yourselves :
'Tis in the Bible, mates, be sure of that,
And 'tis a text that all can understand.
Work out your own Salvation. That is it,
And this shall be the sermon. Firstly, Feet
Must work it out by forcing you to pass
The glare that lures you to the drinking place
And lights the way to hell. Secondly, Hands
Must work it out, by giving without grudge
A good day's work for a fair wage ; and third,
The Head must work it out by keeping clear
For any sense we have to lead us right ;
Fourthly, the Heart must work it out in love
To wife, and little ones, and friendliness
With one another, and no cheating, mates.
Nor besting, don't you see ? Now drive this home,
And you will find it every working day
A very good salvation. For the rest,
They say that Jesus was a working man,
And that He really has some care for us ;
And if the half of what the parsons say
Is Gospel truth, I have no sort of doubt
That He respects a man who thus works out
His own salvation. Now, mates, say Amen !
I mean no wrong, I pray it every night—
God help the man who tries to help himself ! ”
So spoke a man but a few nights ago
To a small group who kept outside the church,
While every hearer seemed to agree with him.
And who shall say the sermon was all wrong ?

"A SAD TIME" ?

Is life all sorrow ?

Has no to-morrow

A promise true ?

Is no hope bringing

A theme for singing

Even to you ?

Is no child laughing ?

No neighbour quaffing

Some cup of joy ?

Is no cloud rifted ?

Is no light lifted ?

Is all alloy ?

Are no buds growing ?

Are no streams flowing

To make you glad ?

Does no one love you ?

Oh ! look above you,

And be not sad.

Though night be round you,

And grief surround you,

Yet God is near ;

When fear appals you,

Your Father calls you

His child, and dear.

Sad days are ever

For brave endeavour.

Dear heart, be wise.

The sun is stronger.

The day is longer,

Hope lights the skies.

Why are you dreary ?

Trust and be cheery.

Be not opprest ;

Sorrow and sadness

Give place to gladness,

All's for the best.

WHAT TO BELIEVE.

"Is there anything in these days of change and doubt that one can believe?"—A LETTER.

HE has no joy who has no trust !

The greatest faith brings greatest pleasure,
And I believe because I must ;

And would believe in perfect measure.

Therefore I send

To you, my friend,

This key to open mines of treasure—
Whatever else your hands restrain,
Let faith be free, and trust remain.

Believe in summer's sun and shade,

Although to-day the snow be falling ;
Expect glad voices in the glade,

Though now the winds alone are calling ;

Have eyes to see

How fair things be ;

Let hope, not fear, be most enthralling ;
And skies that shine will oftencst be
Stretched lovingly o'er thine and thee.

Have loyal faith in all thy kin,

Believe the best of one another ;
One Father's heart takes all men in,

Be not suspicious of thy brother.

If one deceive,

Why disbelieve

The rest, and so all kindness smother ?
Who the most looks for love will find
Most certainly that hearts are kind.

Regard the age with hopeful thought,

Not it, but thou thyself art debtor ;
Behold what wonders have been wrought,

Believe the world is getting better.

Oh, be thou brave

To help and save,

And free men's hands from every fetter,
Yet know that cheery hopefulness
Is the great factor in success.

Above all things, in God believe,
And in His love that lasts for ever ;
No changeful friend thy heart to grieve
Is He, who will forsake thee never.
In shine or shower,
His blessings dower
The souls that trust with strong endeavour.
Believe, believe, for faith is best ;
Believe and find unbroken rest.

EACH ONE.

IN the thronged and crowded street
What am I ?
But a little unit speak
Men pass by.
Nothing worth to those I meet,
Yet with space for my own feet,
And the right to choose my way,
Claiming for my life God's day
'Neath His sky.
And the world is all for me,
Though but one ;
All the best of earth is free,
God's will done :
Air and space, and rain and shine,
God has given to be mine ;
A'! His good things I may take,
Since He gives for love's dear sake
Every one.
Oh ! my brother, in the throng
Have no fear ;
Love is never absent long,
God is near.
All His children have their share
In the loving Father's care ;
You and I are never lost
In the crowd. Love counts no cost,
And holds each dear.

WHEN EVENING COMES.

WHEN evening comes
I shall be tired enough ;
The work may be unfinished,
The hour late,
And since the storms were fierce,
The waves were rough,
I may not land
With ecstasy elate ;
Yet shall I drop the oars
And hasten home,
Glad that at last
The eventide has come.

When the light fails,
And I can do no more
Than lift my weary eyes
To one dear face,
I shall forget
The perils off the shore,
And find my comfort
In that resting-place ;
And if no " Well done ! "
Steal upon my ears,
Lips that forgive
May kiss away my tears.

Though the night darken,
I am not afraid ;
The dangers are all over,
I at rest ;
The arms of love around
Meet undismayed ;
Whatever God may send,
It is the best ;
And I in quiet peace
Will wait and pray,
Till the day break
And shadows flee away

WHAT CHEER?

Who wants to know what the old folks say ?
Not always the young.
They ask the watchman, "What of the day ?
What songs will be sung ?
What pleasures lie in the future years ?
What gold is for me ?"
Their faces turn to the sunrise gifts
Of the land and sea.

But the sunset faces, wistful, grave,
Seek each other most,
And, "Watchman, what of the night ?" they ask,
"And what have we lost ?
What is behind the gathering mists
For you and for me ?"
They watch the dark as it glooms and grows
On the land and sea.

And hey ! for the cheer the old men raise,
How it thrills the heart !
"There is nought to fear, and the way is clear
As at the start.
The harvest comes at the summer's end :
Have we lost the flowers ?
But golden wheat is our guerdon now,
And restful hours."

Who wants to know what the old folks say ?
Those who are old.
Ah ! prophet lips be not silent yet—
All is not told.
Send a word of cheer to the comrades near
On the shortening road.
For sweet is the old man's psalm when he sings
Of the love of God.

A SERENE MIND.

*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace
Whose mind is stayed on Thee."*

Lord, what a hush falls on my soul
When these words comfort me !
For I am often tossed about,
And like the restless sea.

So many cares, so many pains
Come to me day by day ;
How can I keep a mind serene
Along earth's troubled way ?
How hold my soul in quietness,
And let Thy peace have sway ?

I am not strong nor brave enough,
I am with those who weep,
I cannot sing a song of hope,
Nor bid life's sorrow sleep ;
Dear Lord, I am Thy little child
For Thee to love and keep.

I cannot stay my mind on Thee
Unless Thou make me calm ;
Lead Thou me where still waters are,
And by the restful palm,
Until I change my discontent
Into a trustful psalm.

Lord, Thou canst make serenity,
And bid the storms to cease ;
Thou only canst give quietness,
And give me faith's increase ;
O Lord, I stay my heart on Thee,
Keep me in perfect peace.

A RETURNED LESSON.

I THOUGHT I knew it well,
But when I tried to tell
The words and meanings of the lesson learned
My heart sank low for shame ;
I bore the scholar's name,
But the true lesson I had not discerned.

Through mazes of swift doubt
I sought to find it out,
And bring it back into my vacant brain ;
I played a useless part,
I had it not by heart,
And therefore my poor efforts were in vain.

I think my Teacher's face
For all its tender grace
Grew stern and sad : I dare not meet His eyes.
No angry word He said
As I bent low my head
And sobbed for sorrow that I was not wise.

I know the grace I lack :
I have my lesson back,
And in humility and bitter pain,
Yet with a hopeful heart,
Resolved to do my part,
I set myself unto my task again.

But—oh, my Master, hear !
Be not Thou far, but near,
Teach me Thyself my lesson, or I fail ;
I am so weak, dear Lord,
Give it me word by word ;
That which Thyself hast spoken must prevail.

THE SCHOOL OF LOVE.

“He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine.”

Come to our school,
Where Love is the teacher,
Where Love is companion,
And Love the great preacher.
Love has her scholars,
All apt and discerning;
Love makes her lessons
The sweetest for learning.

Love would have pupils
Be happy and restful;
Difficult tasks
Should not make them distressful;
They need not mourn
That they do not rise faster,
If they are learning
The will of the Master.

Knowledge is not the test,
Here, of promotion;
Love and obedience
Guide every motion.
They take the highest place
Who, not delaying,
Haste at the Master's word,
Gladly obeying.

Yes, there is much to learn
In God's school, ever,
Doctrine and precept,
And wisdom's endeavour.
We must be diligent,
Aiming, pursuing,
But the best way of all
Is to learn through Love's doing.

THE SONG OF THE DOORKEEPER.

(Psalm lxxxiv.)

I sit at the threshold. Not for me
The place where the singers are ;
The voice of the reader comes to me
Down the sacred aisles from afar.
Not mine are the prayers that lead the throng
To the throne of God on high.
No thrilling message is given to me
That shall draw the people nigh.
I wait at the threshold—only that—
While the rest pass up the floor ;
But I thank my God who has honoured me
As a keeper of the door.

I long, I faint for the sacred courts,
I thirst for the living God ;
Fair paths lead up to Thy blessed House;
They are ways that my feet have trod.
So deep is the peace of Thine altars, Lord..
That a sparrow may make her nest
Where all the weary and sad of heart
Have a deep, unbroken rest.
Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house.
They ever are praising Thee ;
I with the others, O God my King,
For Thou givest Thy joys to me.

I pass through the valley of tears and find
A well in the wilderness ;
The pilgrims to Zion, how strong they grow
As the onward way they press.
Nearer and nearer, from strength to strength,
They come and in Zion meet,
And blessed are they whose strength is in Thee,
Who gather about Thy feet.
Thou art a Sun and a Shield to all
Whose hope and trust are in Thee.
O Lord, give ear to my prayer, and pour
Thy glory and grace on me.

I stand on the threshold and keep the gate,
Ah ! honoured indeed am I,
For I watch the tribes as they all go up
And sing as they pass me by.
Let the place be filled with Thy glory, Lord,
While the crowds around Thee wait ;
And a glimpse will come through the courts to me
As I faithfully keep the gate.
Solemn and deep are the people's prayers,
And glad is the people's praise ;
A day that is spent in Thy house, O Lord,
Has the joy of a thousand days !

“ SO HE BRINGETH THEM.”

Out in the wilderness
Wandering wearily,
Hungering, shelterless,
Crying so drearily,
Making no progress
Toward Homeland and rest.
Often we question
Can this way be best ?
Are we forsaken ?
Or is there a guide ?
Can it be true
That the Lord will provide ?
Ah, but the answer
Shall come before long,
And lips that are sighing
Break forth into song.

Rudderless, anchorless,
How are we driven !
Winds sweep the ocean,
Clouds cover the heaven,
Wild is the tempest,
And long is the night,
The dawn still delays,
Though the prayer is for light.

Tossed by the billows,
Cast into the deep,
Frail is the barque,
Where we struggle and weep.
How can the voyagers
Reach home at last ?
But the haven is ours,
And the danger is past.

No one is fatherless,
No one is left,
No one is utterly
Crushed and bereft.
We are God's children,
Though out on the wild ;
He who redeems us
Is watching each child.
Though in the wilderness,
Though on the sea,
Not far is the haven
Where each would fain be ;
And He, if in tempest
Or danger we roam,
By the right way, the best way,
Is bringing us home.

TOO LATE ?

“ Sing unto the Lord a new song.”

“ BUT I have lost my voice,” he said.
“ I once was in the choir,
I could have sung the whole day long
Of praise and love's desire ;
No urging needed I to sing,
It was my constant choice,
But now the years have left me weak,
I cannot raise my voice.”

"Sing in the lower tones," she said;

 "Low tones are soft and sweet,
Young voices reach the higher notes
 When they the morning greet.
But songs that thrill at eventide
 Are tender, low and calm;
Sing of the mercy of your God
 In some glad pilgrim psalm."

"I have quite lost the pitch," he said,

 "And have confused the key;
Why should I break upon the chords,
 And spoil the harmony?
All mine are old, forgotten songs,
 The songs of other days;
God wants good voices in His choir,
 I can but falter praise."

"But yet your heart still sings," she said,

 "And heart-songs are the best;
And who should sing if not the old,
 Who pass from work to rest?
Sing, that those nearest you may hear,
 And their faith grow more strong;
Have you no thankful hymn to raise,
 Who prove God's love lasts long!"

"Ah! He has taught me this," he said,

 "And I will sing again,
The singer, though his voice be weak,
 In song forgets his pain;
Perhaps e'en to my trembling voice
 The honour may be given
Still to take part in His great choir
 On earth, and then in heaven."

AFTER DARK.

"So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on."

THROUGH the sunny hours of day
Happy hearts may well be singing !
Little children at their play,
And old men their praises bringing
Fill the noontide with their song
As in homes and streets they throng.

But at night, amid the gloom,
When no star is seen to glisten,
And the earth is like a tomb,
They may hear who wait and listen,
Sweet low songs of peace and love
Sent by human lips above.

'Tis not strange that man and lark
Sing because the day is cheery,
But the singers in the dark,
When the way they take is dreary,
Must be strangely glad to raise
Then the song of joy and praise.

Where do they who sing at night
Gain their hope and inspiration ?
They have walked with God in light,
And they rest in His salvation ;
So they sing because they trust,
Sing because from joy they must.

They have come along a way
Chequered, dangerous and hidden,
But they had a Guide alway,
And have gone where He has bidden,
And they sing because they know
He is with them where they go.

Safely, tenderly, with hands
 Like a Father's, all-caressing,
 He has led them through the lands,
 Crowning them with joy and blessing ;
 Shall they cease to sing to Him
 Now because the light is dim ?

Saviour, through the thickening night
 Trends the path Thy hosts are treading,
 Nor does any cloud of light
 Go before to still their dreading ;
 In the darkness Thou canst see
 Pleading eyes upraised to Thee.

But Thy children do not fear !
 Every page of their life's story
 Thus records—" Our Lord is near,
 And our eyes shall see His glory."
 Ah ! they need no other light,
 Happy singers in the night.

A PROMISE.

" I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee,
 Fear not ; I will help thee."—ISAIAH XLI. 13.

I HEAR the words in the morning, at the birth of a fair new
 day :

They are sweet as the glad spring music, and they come as I
 kneel to pray :

I have dreaded the day a little ; but the promise shall make
 me strong—

I will rise and pursue my journey, though the way shall be
 rough or long.

I know there are many dangers in the path that I have
 to take :

But I ask for my Father's presence, and know He will not
 forsake :

And now that I have His promise, there is not a thing to fear,
 For the sun glints through to the pathway whenever the Lord
 is near.

I hear the rush of the waters, that tell of the rising tide,
And I know, ere I rest at nightfall, I must cross to the other
side ;

But why should my spirit fail me, as I look on the seething
wave ?

I have had a message from heaven—it is this that has made
me brave.

As I pass from my safe home-shelter, I look at the meadows
gold ;

God has given the earth spring-gladness—He has promised my
hand to hold ;

And though I must climb rough places, and have difficult work
to do,

Since I know that the Lord will help me, I will sing as I struggle
through.

You talk of the gathering darkness. It is black as a winters'
night ;

I know when it closes round me I shall sigh for the vanished
light ;

I shall stretch out my hands with longing—but then they will
touch His hand ;

Do you think I shall mind the shadows if my Father so near
me stand ?

If at night I am over-weary, the sweeter will be my sleep ;
For well are they watched and tended whom the Father of
love will keep ;

So I pass to the unknown dangers. Will you wish me God-
speed to-day ?

When we meet in the heavenly morning the pain will have
passed away.

SONGS OF MEN AND PLACES.

Songs of Men and Places.

WHITTIER.

GOD nursed a boy with strengthening things,
He lifted him on the storm's wings,
Into his face He blew the snow,
What the sea said He bade him know ;
He gave him music of the birds,
And melodies of household words,
And for his birthright made him free,
And gave him clear, bright eyes to see
Which straight path led to liberty.

The boy became a man. He wrought
With words. His capital was thought.
And he gained riches ; his life's gold
Doubled and increased manifold.
These were the profits that he drew—
A share in all good, old and new,
The bettered lives of many men,
Harvests of seeds sown by his pen,
Fruits of strong words that made men brave,
And freedom given to the slave ;

Prayers that the burdened hearts might speak,
Songs that made heroes of the weak,
Lamps that he hung on the dark road
To light his brothers home to God.
So traded he with what he had
That by these riches he made glad
Great hosts of needy souls, and brought
From his invested stores of thought
The gold of which grand deeds are wrought.

Thus Whittier, Christ-like, lived to bless ;
He hated nought on earth but wrong ;
He filled the world he loved with song,
He blended strength with gentleness.

How little for mere fame he cared !
How much for right he bravely dared !
And all he had with others shared !
Well did men own him a true knight.
He brought his Master to their sight.

God gave him a long summer-time,
 And kept his life's year in its prime,
 Till, late, the Greenleaf felt the touch
 Of Autumn's breath, and loving much,
 Dropped gently from the world, and went
 Home to his Lord with great content.

RUSKIN.

"LEAVES of wild olive, cool and grey"
 Around his brow, peace in his breast,
 Out of the twilight into day
 He passed, for he had won his rest,
 And saw the gates through sunset burn—
 "Gates of the Hills whence none return."

Teacher and Preacher, Prophet, Seer,
 He gave to us new sight, new love ;
 He made all life shine brave and clear,
 And lights of earth as lights above.
 The world of thought, the minds of men,
 He lifted up to God again.

He gave us gold of heart and brain,
 He made us love the truest best.
 His lesson-legacies remain
 Hopes "of grey honour and sweet rest."
 Is Ruskin dead ? He cannot die,
 God gave him immortality.

My master he, whose words of light
 Called me through life, from stage to stage,
 Up many a far and breezy height
 To claim my soul's true heritage.
 I, one disciple, give God praise
 For lore he taught in all my days.

He, on the glorious mountain slopes,
 And where the dead stones throb with life,
 Upraised a people's dreams and hopes,
 And made us choose the nobler strife ;
 We know him now that he is gone—
 "Man sent from God, whose name was John."

JOHN BUNYAN.

A STAR on the night had arisen—

A prophet—and men bade him cease.

He “must speak” ! Then they shut him in prison.

But “the name of the chamber was Peace.”

Did the angels laugh out in their pleasure ?

We cannot but share in the mirth ;

A sentence of Silence and Leisure,

O boon of ineffable worth !

A vision from God came to cheer him—

He could not be lonely or sad.

While his little blind daughter sat near him.

And faith made his heart to be glad.

He climbed the Delectable Mountains,

He breathed the soft flower-scented air,

And Immanuel’s Land, with its fountains,

Lay before him entrancingly fair.

He was dressed in whole armour by Graces,

And he was the victor in fight,

And brotherly, love-lighted faces

Smiled forth in the darkness of night.

From the Valley of Humiliation

He rose to the tasks that remained.

Until, with a shout of salvation,

The Gate of the City was gained.

As to John in far Patmos was given,

So to him—the commandment to “Write !”

Are Johns best beloved of Heaven ?

Both wrote that the world might have light.

And he, whom men silenced, has spoken

In tones that the whole world has heard ;

He was one sent from God by the token

That the hearts of all nations were stirred.

Now in palace and cabin his pages

Are treasured as if they were gold ;

And his words shall be heard through all ages.

Thank God for John Bunyan of old.

THE QUEEN'S CORONATIONS.

We crowned her first, long years ago,
In her fair girlhood's days,
When all the vistas of the years
Opened in sunny ways,
And all her people sang her name
In peans of glad praise.

Love crowned her with the sweetest crown
Ever a Queen could wear,
And dear became her royal state
Because her love might share,
And life was radiant with high hopes
And beautiful though prayer.

Then Sorrow crowned her, all too soon,
And bade her work and wait,
While Duty took the place of Joy,
And Care moved with her state.
But it was Sorrow's crown, perhaps,
Made her most truly great.

More heavy grew the royal crown
With added weight of years :
She always wore it bravely, though
Oft sad through loss and fears.
But the love of all her people made
Her comfort in her tears.

We crowned her with the noblest crown
Along the dolorous way,
When all the peoples of the world
Mourned with us night and day—
Ah, Queen revered, for ever Queen,
How mighty is thy sway !

And God has crowned her, victor now,
On high, among the blest :
His hand has placed upon her brow
The dearest and the best—
The crown of life that will not fade,
His crown of peace and rest.

**HAMPDEN'S MOTTO :
NO FOOTPRINTS BACKWARD.**

RISE and go forward ! At that word
Hope marshals all her troops to-day.
Men lift their heads in swift accord,
Ready for the impending fray.
The times are urgent. Once again
England reviews her marching men.
We have had heroes, have we yet ?
Let them come forth ! No men mean-souled
Can do the task before us set.
These peoples will not be controlled
Except by real men, and strong.
Let the true freemen lead the throng.
Whither ? The desert lies behind.
Cleared ? Nay, not quite ; some shifting sand
Still clogs the feet, but the free mind
Looks forward to the promised land,
And upward to the beckoning heights,
And follows no uncertain lights.
The cry is Forward ! We leave trace
Of steps for other feet to take.
The best traditions of our race
Impel us onward. Let us make
A good advance. Is it not time ?
Surely the age is in its prime !
See where the flowers bedeck the sod.
Oh ! if our England knew at length
The will of Christ, the voice of God,
And the true secret of her strength,
And the foundations of her state,
She would at last dare to be great.
We hear, if through some dissonance,
The steady, rhythmic march of men
Who vow to conquer circumstance
And open Eden's gates again.
Ah ! Leaders, have you found the key ?
Bring it into the light and see !

Love, patience, honour, fortitude,

Humility and reverence—

These raise us to the altitude

Which God has made our place, and thenceo

Alone can come the life and health

Of a great, noble Commonwealth.

EVENING PRAYER IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

So deep the hush we cannot even hear

The heart-throbs of the city. All is still

As if we feared to waken those who sleep

Here in the House of Rest for the great dead.

The soft caressing light comes warmly in

And makes the marble faces flush like life,

And seems to waken even those who sleep,

Bidding them live again. They are alive !

We feel the presences of living men,

Chaucer and Browning, poet sires and sons,

Addison, Tennyson the well-beloved,

Handel and Livingstone—they all are here,

Whose voices grow not silent with the years,

But join us in the great Magnificat,

And in their songs do magnify the Lord,

Who hath put down the mighty from their seat,

And hath exalted them of low degree.

It cannot be the white-robed choir alone

Which thrills with triumph the Apostles' Creed,

But surely the departed swell the song.

The Holy Catholic Church throughout the world

Is represented here ; and we and they,

The Church below and glorious Church above,

Unite to worship Christ upon the throne,

And sing our Alleluias unto Him

Who has redeemed our souls and made them His,

Whose royal gift is everlasting life.

“GEVE THANKS TO GOD ALWAIES.”**(An Inscription on a Church Bell.)**

FOR more than thrice a hundred years
Of dark or sunny days
This bell has pealed its message forth,
Geve thanks to God alwaies ;
And village folk from age to age
The legend held for heritage.

The old church tower has drawn all eyes,
Young eyes with glad hopes bright,
And eyes of old men dull with toil,
And faces turned t'ward night;
And the great bell through all the days
Has called, “ Geve thanks to God alwaies.”

In fruitful seasons when the trees
With crimson fruits were crowned,
When golden corn enriched the fields
And harvest wreathed the ground;
And in the days of drought or rain,
“ Geve thanks to God ” was the refrain.

Some heard, gave heed, and understood
The message of the bell,
And they have lived their lives of joy
By valley, field, and fell.
For light has shone on all their days
Who have given thanks to God always.

To-day the bell peals as of yore,
Day breaks, and evening glooms,
And birds sing out their songs of joy
Above the orchard blooms,
And happy are those sons of men
Who heed the legend once again.

THE THAMES.

Our river

Sings for gladness every day ;

Our river

Is the world's great waterway ;

Here the ships of all the world

Have their countries' flags unfurled,

For the Home and Outward-bound

Here have equal welcome found,

And our river binds together

Sons and strangers in all weather,

Great and small,

Brothers all.

Our river

Grows true men upon its banks ;

Our river

Laughs to scorn the pride of ranks,

But it keeps the sacred names,

And the bright untarnished fames

Of its Cromwell, Milton, Drake,

Shakespeare, Gordon, all who make

For our righteousness and peace,

And their glory shall not cease

While the Thames

Keeps her gems.

Our river

Bears a burden of great cares ;

Our river

Hears the sounds of many prayers,

Carries many a sinful freight,

Flows with many a gleam of light,

Safely keeps a world of treasure,

Plays its part in song and pleasure.—

May the great God aye fulfil

By the waters His good will,

And for ever

Bless our river !

AN EASTER CUSTOM AT CAPRI.

LOVELIER far than any dream
Is that island in the bay,
When the sunbeams dance and gleam
On the blessed Easter Day.
And the orange groves are sweet,
And the flowers are in the street,
While the waters flash and play.

All the people's hearts are glad
When the bells ring out for prayer ;
And they would that none were sad
On their isle, or anywhere.
For the dear Christ, who is risen,
Has set free the souls in prison,
And His joy is in the air.

So they bring all captive birds
To their church above the sea,
And, when sound the holy words,
The sweet singers are set free.
Outward, upward, into light,
Flashing wings and colours bright,
Fly the birds in merry glee.

Then the people are content,
For their joy has made them kind.
Surely Christ, the Master, meant
That all things be unconfined,
Since on Easter morning He,
From the power of death set free,
Left the dreary grave behind !

So from Capri we discern
That our Easter gift should be
Freedom, given in return
For our prized liberty.
Let us free some captive thing,
Let us make some heart to sing,
Because Christ has made us free !

CANTERBURY.

I STAND in the ivy-covered church,
While a young voice sings in the choir
"Rest in the Lord, and wait for Him,
He will give thee thy heart's desire."
And the words are read from the sacred Book,
The best-beloved, the best
"Come unto Me, ye labouring ones,
And I will give you rest."
Then a long procession of bygone days
Passes before my thought,
And I see the wonders, in pictured scenes,
Which faith and prayer have wrought.

Green were the fields and the sloping hills,
And the city of Kent was fair,
When Ethelbert met the stranger-monk
Near this little place of prayer :
And how could he close his generous heart
To the message of peace that came,
When he knew that Bertha, in passionate love,
Was calling on Jesu's name ?
Oh ! never a brighter day has dawned
In this ancient, sunny shire,
Than that when Ethelbert's faith grew bright,
And the Queen had her heart's desire.

Loyally, lovingly, one by one,
The beautiful stones were placed,
Till the grand cathedral, our noblest church,
The town of the " Kent men " graced.
Ah ! many a longing, many a prayer,
That they might not labour in vain,
Year after year went up to God
From the builders of this fane !
And He has given their heart's desire,
For the weary have ceased their quest,
And found a home in the Father's house,
When they came in faith for rest.

And ever since, through the long, long years,
The song that I hear to-day
Has been sung to many a pilgrim band,
And has cheered their lonely way.
"Rest in the Lord, and wait for Him,"
Such is the sweet refrain ;
It has quieted turbulent hearts always,
It has peace for me again.
"The Lord will give thee thy heart's desires."
Then why should I be distrest ?
I will patiently wait and hope for Him,
Growing strong through faith and rest.

"BENLEDI."

THE old Scotch mountain, towering high,
Received its title long ago—
The "Hill of God" : and men drew nigh
And (as 'twas given to them to know)
They sacrificed and worshipped there,
Amid the sunlight and the air.

What was it gave to them the thought
To choose a mountain for their rites,
And far from earth and nearer heaven,
To seek God in those early lights ?
They could not know ; they only guessed
That the high places were the best !

Yet, surely, He who called the men
To Sinai, Ebal, Gerizim,
Who willed from Zion's height to take
The temple sacrifice and hymn,
Inspired the Gaelic heart to rise
A little nearer to the skies.

And here, far from Jerusalem,
They tried to satisfy the heart
By climbing upward to the heights,
And going from the world apart.
So in all ages, everywhere,
The hill has wooed the worshipper.

And now in these our modern times,
When the earth holds us all too fast,
'Tis good to leave the lower lands,
And heed the lessons of the past,
And come where only few have trod,
To rest upon the hills of God.

His peace is in these summer days,
He moves among the fields of corn,
His smile shines through the woodland ways,
His voice awakes the world at morn :
But best we know Him in the lights
That touch His own grand mountain heights.

A GRAVE IN FLORENCE.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning is buried in the Protestant Cemetery at Florence. There is no inscription on the tomb but the letters E. B. B. Ob. 1861.

It is a nameless grave. The marble white
Bears only three initials and a date ;
No one was left who worthily could write
An epitaph for her, so good, so great.

The flowers creep near her grave, and over her
The nightingales are singing all night long ;
But Florence at her loveliest cannot stir
Again our singer, nor awake her song.

“ Our singer ? ” Yes, our own, not Italy's ;
She loved both countries, but we loved her best,
And evermore the English heart it is
That throbs with sorrow near her place of rest.

She dignified her womanhood, and earned,
By grace and strength and sweetness, the world's praise ;
But best to her the truths her mind discerned,
And her great gladness in the working days

And is the work all finished ? the song stilled ?

It is not thus that God His servants pays !
Who faithfully small duties has fulfilled
Has greater work to do on longer days.

And so I hope that in the world of light
Our singer uses still her powers, God-given,
And that which helped to make the earth-world bright
Still helps in all the gladness of His heaven.

KYNANCE COVE, CORNWALL.

A PLACE of palaces not made with hands,
Of rocky walls, with golden sanded floor !
And are they fays or angels that all day
Fill the cool rooms with music ? The sweet lyre
And the majestic organ can be heard,
Though none can see the fingers that thereon
Make melody. It is a place of dreams :
The world is far away—the dull old world—
And this is fairyland. A touch, a sound,
And the great past is summoned to these coves,
Where sweet hopes come, and lovers tell fond tales,
And little children play their merry games—
For who can think of sin, or want, or woe
Within the Cove of Kynance ?

The grand sea
Loves every rock and crevice. For awhile
He wanders off that he may come again
In passionate desire to kiss the feet
Of the tall, graceful rocks whose brows are crowned
With sunlight ; and he sings, and laughs, and cries,
While in their stately beauty they remain
Unmoved for ever, smiling and serene.

Oh that all weary men might rest awhile
Here in the great recesses. World-worn brows
Would clearer grow : sad eyes would smile again ;
And lips, long silent, sing a song of praise
For the sweet beauty of the sea and sands,
And the strong rocks that evermore proclaim
The glory, power, and majesty of God.

AN OLD CITY.

THE wonder is that it has stood
Through centuries of wind and flood !
How much it had of what appals,
Such storms have beaten on its walls
Such plague and pestilence and fear,
In forms of terror have drawn near,
And threatened it with cruel hands—
And yet it stands !

Men's agonies and women's tears
The city saw through all the years,
Fierce deeds of darkness done in night,
Unrighteous victories won in fight,
Unhappy lives lived all in vain
Because of hate and greed of gain,
And brothers slain by brothers' hands—
And yet it stands !

But many comforts it has known,
And has their record kept in stone !
It has been strengthened by pure airs,
Made musical by songs and prayers,
And it has looked on noble deeds,
Seen flowers and fruits instead of needs,
And faithful hearts and loving hands—
And so it stands !

God loved the city and its men
(Although few loved Him back again).
He gave it all things that are best—
Joy, sorrow, labour, love and rest,
The summer's heat, the winter's cold,
Some loss, some gain, some dross, some gold,
And blessed it with His generous hands—
Therefore it stands

THE ANSWERING SONG.

THE Adriatic sea is fair

With light and shade at close of day,
When men go bravely forth to dare

The perils of the watery way.
They speak their farewells merrily,
And glean the harvests of the sea

With patient care upon the deep,
While children sleep, and winds are free.

But when into the night they go,

The fishers' wives come to the shore,
And, with their faces all aglow,

With love that shines for evermore,
They, standing at the water's rim,
Sing the first stanza of a hymn

In voices that are sweet and clear
For them to hear, when lights are dim.

They listen. Then the kind waves toss

Their husbands' answer through the night.
The second stanza floats across

To them; and then, with glad delight,
The women smile and go their way
In restfulness till break of day;

They know the men are comforted
And quieted, and so are they.

And thus, perhaps, our loved ones hear

On heavenly shores the hymns we raise,
And o'er the distance, dim or clear,

They send an answering note of praise.
Let not our songs in silence cease!

If we in storm, and they in peace,

Both praise the Christ they see above,
We yet may make their joy increase.

LOST NAMES.

"Those women which laboured with me in the Gospel, and other my fellow-labourers whose names are written in the Book of Life."

THEY lived, and they were useful : this we know,
And nought beside ;
No record of their names is left to show
How soon they died ;
They did their work, and then they passed away,
An unknown band,
And took their places with the greater host
In the higher land.

And were they young, or were they growing old,
Or ill, or well,
Or lived in poverty, or had much gold,
No one can tell ;
One only thing is known of them : they were
Faithful and true,
Disciples of the Lord, and strong through prayer
To save and do.

But what avails the gift of empty fame ?
They lived to God.
They loved the sweetness of another Name,
And gladly trod
The rugged ways of earth, that they might be
Helper or friend,
And in the joy of this their ministry
Be spent and spend.

No glory clusters round their names on earth,
But in God's heaven
Is kept a book of names of greatest worth,
And there is given
A place for all who did the Master please,
Although unknown,
And these lost names shine forth in brightest rays
Before the throne.

Oh ! take who will the boon of fading fame !
But give to me
A place among the workers though my name
Forgotten be :
And if within the Book of Life is found
My lowly place,
Honour and glory unto God redound
For all His grace !

LAKE NEUCHATEL.

A PRETTY child asleep in Nature's arms,
And dreaming happy dreams that make it smile,
So lies the lake ; and all that ruffles it
Are such soft, zephyr kisses on its face
As make it smile the more. The parent hills
Stand ever watching and protecting it
In satisfied content and proudest love,
As if they joyed for ever in their child.
Around its slopes the green vines and young grapes
Strive to be beautiful, to shame it not ;
And all the joyous people of the hills
Turn their strained eyes from Jura's dazzling height,
And the far-distant sight of fair Mont Blanc,
To look upon its loveliness again
With glad home-resting eyes. So we thank God
As well for quiet beauties, as for those
We cannot but admire, and yet love less !

IN THE FIELDS OF BETHLEHEM.

THIS morning world, how fair it seems !

The glad sun kisses its bright face,
The hills rejoice, the white stone gleams,
The young corn dances in its place,
And all the fields are clothed with grace.

Ah, fields ! there is not on the earth
Ground hallowed with such memories !
Whose heart swells not with tender mirth
And prayerful praise in scenes like this,
Where the past more than present is ?

Here in these fields, one harvest-time,
Gleaned gentle Ruth among the corn,
And heard again love's thrilling chime ;
And here Naomi, sad, forlorn,
Saw Sorrow wait on Hope new-born.

In the calm beauty of these slopes
The shepherd-poet's heart grew strong,
And all the heavens were gleaming hopes,
That urged his passionate soul along
The Godward way of light and song.

His young heart, full of meek amaze,
Received the Prophet's strange command ;
He bent his head in awe and praise
At touch of the anointing hand
That made him king of all the land.

Then, sunny fields, how glad you were !
But gladder still that wondrous night
When some strange music filled the air,
And the new star shone clear and bright,
And the Christ-Child came down in light.

Peace and goodwill to men ! The word
Flashed on the world like starry gem ;
Nor sweeter music earth has heard,
To comfort men and strengthen them,
Than that which came from Bethlehem.

Ah, fair green fields, live on ! The song
You heard that night rings evermore,
And bears its mighty hope along.
Life-giving, until every shore
Glow's in God's light, and night is o'er !

JUNGFRAU.

NONE can describe thy graceful dignity,
Fair lady of the mountains. Evermore
Thou wearest bridal robes of dazzling white,
Although the years have made thee motherly.
Fit to be held in reverence thou art,
And yet thy life is full of ministries,
As the green valleys lying in the sun
Do testify. All men look up to thee
And smile to see thy crown of diamonds,
Queen of the Alps. Thou holdest every eye
As only beauty can ; and the great heights,
The Silberhorn, Schneehorn, and Wengernalp.
Seem all to do thee homage, as they may,
So far art thou above them. What a world
Of wondrous beauty dost thou look upon !
Fair Lauterbrunnen is below thee spread,
And matchless Grindelwald. The Staubbach fall
Sings to thee all the day. The swift Lütchine
Carries thy praises forward. Mürren courts
Thy favour day and night ; and the Breithorn,
Thy white-snow sister, turns her face to thee.
But thou dost draw all faces to thy face,
Yet nothing makes thee vain. Thou shinest on,
Giving the good thou canst, and taking all—
Calm, dignified, unsullied, unelate—
Because thou art, Queen Jungfrau, really great.

A MEMORY OF LAKE COMO.

AFTER the heat of cities
That quiet on the lake
Was like a dream of heaven
Given for comfort's sake.
We sailed o'er sun-kissed waters,
And blue skies stretched above ;
And all the wide green world around
Was bright with peace and love.
The towns had fascinations -
Rome, ever fair and great,
And laughter-loving Naples,
And Pompeii's dead state,
Flowery, artistic Florence,
And Venice in the sea,
But neither was more beautiful
Than Como was, to me.
The mighty hills stretched heavenward ;
The vines upon the slopes
Were young, and green and vigorous,
Like a strong heart's best hopes ;
The waterfalls flashed downward,
Their eager leaps to take,
And nought of perfect beauty
Was absent from the lake.
There were the soft-browed mountains
Bedecked with myriad flowers,
And green-bright hills that must have caught
All of heaven's gentlest showers ;
And dark and rugged cliffs, that kept
Through all the summer's glow,
Like heads made stern by stress of life,
The cold white crown of snow.
The clear blue lake reflected
The heaven's light and calm ;
The larks and waves together
Were singing some sweet psalm ;

And painful care and trouble
Seemed very far away;
For the boat that skimmed the water
Bore thankful hearts that day.

My wish, in stormy futures,
May be for such an ark,
When other pilots take the helm,
And steer through waters dark.
But God be thanked for memories
That cannot fade away,
And blessings that He makes to last
Through many a cloudy day.

THE TRÜMMELBACH WATERFALL.

THE modern spirit doth possess this fall.
It will get on, whatever may oppose,
Nor stays, though getting on means getting down.
It flings aside all weak things in its way,
And forces even rocks to let it through.
The snow and melting glaciers do but make
Its race more heated and determined. On
It comes down cleft, through rock, o'er everything;
More rapid than the swift bird in its flight,
Or the fierce winds that try to overtake
And do but make it hasten on the more.
It rushes, races, panting, breathless down,—
And all for what? It gains the place it sought,
Enters the river, and is thenceforth lost
And no one sees or hears of it again.

LAKE BRIENZ AND THE GIESSBACH WATERFALLS.

You say 'tis not as fine as some lakes are ?
Perhaps ; and yet the lofty wooded rocks,
The pretty orchard trees, the underwood
That guard its sides and deck its gentle slopes,
And the high mountains looking down on all,
With snow-clad Susten keeping evermore
Far in the background, as it may, because
All eyes will look for it—these are enough
To make the Lake Brienz most beautiful.

But Brienz has a multitude of friends—
The company of Giessbach. They are born
High on the mountain, in a deep ravine,
And with them, in them all is born the love,
Urgent, impassioned, for the passive lake
Waiting for them below. Every one
Of the great family arrays himself
In robes of dazzling silver, so to be
More worthy of his love ; then hurries down,
Caring for nothing but to throw himself
Upon her bosom, and there die in peace.
But as he dies a million more are born,
Each one content to be a silver drop
To lose itself in Brienz, till she grows
So rich that all the silver mines of earth
Could not add anything to her great wealth.
Her duty is to feed her sister, Thun,
But she has always plenty from the store
That comes down leaping, laughing, to her heart
From all the hearts of Giessbach. She may well
Be calm and trustful, as who would not be
With such a multitude of silver friends ?

SONGS OF ENDEAVOUR.

Songs of Endeavour.

CHRIST'S KNIGHT.

HE kneels before the King,
His young head bent ;
His flashing eyes lid-veiled,
His heart intent.
He vows to spend his life
In true endeavour,
And he will serve the Christ
His King for ever.

A touch is on his head
And on his heart,
"Arise my knight," Christ says,
"And do thy part."
Who kneels before the King
In true surrender,
May lift his loyal head
A brave defender !

Ah, faithful heart, be glad,
Christ calls to thee ;
Kneel thou before the King—
Young, strong and free.
Go forth, and do not quail
Where battle rages.
Christ will knight noblemen
Through all the ages.

WHO FOLLOWS CHRIST ?

HE calls not where the silver light
Lies on the waveless sea,
Where idly rock the pleasure-boats,
And summer winds move merrily.
His course is o'er the stormy deep,
He calls to stress and strain,
Who mans the lifeboat for his sake
Must toil all night the wreck to gain.
Where wild winds rage and billows roar,
And death is waiting nigh,
The Christ calls, " Who will follow Me ? "
He must be brave who answers " I."

Yet round about the Master stands
A group of hero souls,
And he is in good company
Who in that list his name enrolls.
No coward hearts, no wavering wills,
Are in that matchless crowd,
But those who lift the Cross on high,
And serve their Master, meekly proud.
Is it too much to ask of thee
The labour and the loss ?
They must be brave who follow Him.
Heroes alone can bear His Cross.

PATHFINDERS.

WHAT is it calls ?
A voice they do not know,
Urgent and deep ;
And they arise and go,
Pushing their way
Through forest and by moor,
In hidden ways
Men never knew before.

A look of anxious care,
A burdened heart,
These are for pioneers
Who thus depart ;
And lonely is their quest,
And rough their way,
While nights are long and drear,
And dawns delay.

Who cheers them ? None !
A mocking cry, " Come back ! "
Assails them when they leave
The beaten track ;
Sneers are the guerdon
Of the men who dare,
There is no pity for them
In despair.

Why do they go ?
They cannot help but peer
With wistful eyes
Into the far and near ;
Because they must they go.
And clear a way
That shall be crowded
On a better day.

Down into depths of thought,
Up starry heights,
Through the dark mazes
Into steadfast lights ;
They go on God's own errands,
And on thine ;
Fear not to follow
Where they lead, and shine.

TO MEET THE DAY.

“ LORD, here am I, send me.” Thy will I know.
It is Thine errand upon which I go,
And I will gladly hasten south or north
When Thou hast said, “ *Behold, I send thee forth.*”

Send me Thyself. If for my dear Lord's sake
Over the rugged road my way I take,
The path will smoother grow, fair be the day,
And I shall walk within a sure, safe way.

Give me Thine orders, Master. What are they ?
My heart is glad when I Thy word obey ;
Thou only canst direct my steps aright,
Thou only canst equip me for the fight.

Send me, dear Master. Lo ! Thy workers stand
In eager hosts awaiting Thy command ;
Yet hast Thou kept for me some useful task.
Hast not Thou trained me ? Therefore, grace I ask.

I go to take Thy message, and for me
There is a wondrous light on earth and sea ;
Thou givest to Thy workers strength and skill,
Nought have I of mine own ; teach me Thy will.

STEPS UPWARD.

TAKE the Guide's strong hand, and go !
If his name is Sorrow,
Do not fear to climb with him
To a clearer morrow.
He can take thee where the night
Passes to divinest light.

Pain holds out a hand to thee,
Take it, never shrinking ;
Lift thy feet and rise with him
Higher than thy thinking.
He who follows Pain's behest
Has at length most perfect rest.

It is God's hand all the time
Urging upward ever ;
Oh, be brave through faith and trust,
Rising by endeavour.
Are the steps dark ? Yet go on,
Every step is victory won.

God has heard thy prayers. Be glad,
Thou art in His keeping.
Morning songs may sweetest be
After nights of weeping.
Sad one, thou shalt sing again
In the sunshine after rain.

Does the mist bewilder thee ?
Climbing make thee weary ?
Yet go forward braced by hope,
Confident and cheery.
To thy many guides is given
Power to lead thee up to heaven.

ENDURE AND HOPE.

"Behold, we call them blessed which endured."—JAMES.

STAND firmly. Do not yield nor quail !
Force back the cry, let Hope prevail ;
Or brace thyself the worst to meet,
Even defeat.

The victor is not always blest,
Thou canst lie down and take thy rest,
A nobleman, though dispossess.

Meet the fierce onslaught. See it comes
With flashing swords and roll of drums ;
Summon thy courage and thy faith
For life or death.

This is no time to faint or fear,
See how the foemen-hosts appear ;
O Knight of Christ, be valiant here.

Lose not thy faith in mists of night,
Keep thy face forward to the light,
The soldier must not fearful be—
Christ is for thee !

A little while be brave, stand fast,
Day breaks, the trouble soon is past ;
Those who endure are crowned at last.

AMPLIUS! AMPLIUS!

BEFORE the painter's work the Master stood,
And with His own keen, comprehending eyes
He scanned the picture and pronounced it good.

Yet did the Master see, for He was wise,
One fault that, unimproved, would spoil the whole.
The painter needed breadth of touch and soul.

Across the canvas with his firm, kind hand
The Master for the scholar's guidance wrote,
“*Amplius ! Amplius !*” He would understand.
And taking home the lesson, humbly note
The narrow lines, and urged by greater hope,
Would give his brush, henceforth, extended scope.

We have been painting pictures ; and to-day
Our Master looks upon them. Does not He,
Seeing our small, cramped efforts, also say,
“ Wider and larger let the picture be ” ?
We are so little, and He is so great,
Oh, let us learn the lesson ere too late.

We work in petty lines, in meagre space ;
So circumscribed our vision and our love ;
We do not see in what a fair, large place,
With broadening fields around, the skies above,
The Father makes our home. Those who shut in
Themselves to narrow limits, theirs the sin !

“*Amplius ! Amplius !*” Let the startling cry
Sound through our little hearts till they expand,
And we our love and service amplify,
And paint our life-lines with courageous hand.
Not for ourselves, our party, kept in thrall,
Let us live henceforth, but reach out to all.

Let us have larger hopes, pray larger prayers ;
Not in the valleys live, but on the heights ;
Rising above the mists of our small cares,
Press upward till we live among the lights ;
So let us love and work, for there we stand
Within the ample space of God's own hand.

Large, ample is the Eden of desire,
The Paradise with gate set open wide,
To which the noblest sons of God aspire,
Where there is room for all men to abide.
Oh, let us find it : who that picture see
Will long amid its ampler joys to be.

THINK ON THESE THINGS.

WITHIN the realm of Thought are kings
Whose will can bind the eagle's wings,
And by imperious power and might
Compel their subjects to the right,
And lead them whereso'er they please—
Be thou of these.

Within the realm of Thought are slaves
Cast here and there as by the waves :
Unstable they and weak of will
To form high purpose, or fulfil.
They are like leaves borne by the breeze—
Be not of these.

But rule with autoeratic sway
Thy subject-thoughts till they obey
Thy dictum faithfully, and bend
Whichever way thy will shall tend.
Be thou the master of thy thought
As a king ought.

And for companions bid thoughts take
Things which for righteousness shall make,
Those which are strong and shall endure,
Those which are clean and sweet and pure,
Those which ascend on upborne wings—
Think on these things.

Search for the flowers that deck the earth,
Listen for songs of joy and mirth ;
Be swift to see the stars at night,
Forget the darkness, love the light ;
Give welcome to all thought that brings
The fairest things.

In the high kingdom of good thought
Life's noblest deeds are nobly wrought ;
Christ sanctifies the world He trod,
And hearts of men rejoice in God ;
And trust in Him great gladness brings—
Think on these things.

KEEP HEART.

“Thou hast patience, and didst bear for My Name’s sake, and hast not grown weary.”—REV. II. 3.

DAYS came, days went, but thine endurance tarried,
A strenuous youth strove into middle age,
Thou, not impatient of the burden carried,
Took’st toil and turmoil for thy heritage.
Thou hast wrought nobly, nobly borne, and now
Keep thy heart strong ; let others fail, not thou.

Thou hast not lost the sweetness of That Name
Which made the music of thy childhood’s hours.
Thy rapture was the broadening of His fame.
Thy weakness loved the testing of His powers.
Let not thy faith fail now, nor thine endeavour ;
No past suffices. Knights are true for ever.

So long thou hast been patient, nor grown weary,
Pain could not force a cry from thee, nor hate
Compel thy love to cease. Are days so dreary
That life at last has made thee desolate ?
Dear heart, call hope to thee once more, nor fret
Thy faith away ; God lives, and loves thee yet.

There is a sound of warfare in the air,
And thou wilt answer to the trumpet-call.
Thou hast worn armour often, yet prepare
Again ; Christ summons thee : art thou not all
His own, to serve Him, live for Him, or die ?
O servant of the King, do well thy part
Once more. A victor thou ! Keep heart, keep heart !

THEY REIGN.

"Then didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom of priests : and they reign upon the earth."

Who are the kings and princes
That hold undoubted sway ?
The saved, the meek, the pure in heart,
The men of Christ are they :
Called to be kings and priests by God,
Theirs is unstained renown,
They rule, and lead the hearts of men,
And none may take their crown.

These sons of God, joint heirs with Christ,
They are of royal birth,
Their might is in their gentleness,
Their heritage the earth ;
They need no heralds to proclaim
Their titles or their right,
Their names are in the book of God,
Their deeds inscribed in light.

They have no armies for defence,
No panoply of state,
No regal splendour decks their brows,
No pomp proclaims them great :
Their triumphs come so silently,
The world can never know
How large their empire has become,
How their possessions grow.

But in the crises of the world,
Its most august affairs,
It is these autocrats of good
Who rule men unawares ;
And for their sakes, and in Christ's Name
Are bloodless victories won :
The crowd thinks otherwise ; but thus
The will of God is done.

“ HIM THAT OVERCOMETH.”

“To him that overcometh
Will I give the tree of life
In the Paradise of God,”
Said the Spirit.
And the soldiers of the Cross
Meekly bear the pain and loss,
That high guerdon by His grace
To inherit.

“To him that overcometh
Will I give the rule of nations
And the bright and morning star,”
Said the Christ.
And the battle that is long
Does not still the triumph song
Of the victors who with Him
Keep the tryst.

“And he that overcometh,
I will make of him a pillar
In the temple of my God,”
Said the Lord.
“And my new name I will write,
In the city of the light,
On the brow that he uplifts
At My word.”

“And he that overcometh
I will give to sit with Me
And my Father on My throne,”
Said the King.
But the saints pray in the Name
Of the Christ who overcame:
“*Unto Him be all the glory,*”
So they sing.

GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW.

Pass over the mountains before thee,
Fear not, for God's kindness is o'er thee,
 Though the path may be rough
 His strength is enough.

Listen not to a coward heart's pleading,
Be sure of the Spirit's wise leading,
 Do thy duty, and be at thy best,
 For God will take care of the rest,
And goodness and mercy shall follow.

Take the task that beside thee is lying,
It waits for thy strenuous trying ;
 Though it tax all thy skill
 It will yield to thy will.

The brave heart is conqueror ever,
Then make but an earnest endeavour,
 And do what the Master commands
 With leal heart and diligent hands,
And goodness and mercy shall follow.

Speak the word that God gives to be spoken,
Break the bonds that God says shall be broken,
 Nor shrink from the fight
 To be fought for the right.

Obey Him with true loyal meekness,
But hinder no cause by thy weakness.
 Have faith, and work on to the last,
 Let all doubtings remain with the past,
And goodness and mercy shall follow.

So often His help has been given,
So near is the present to heaven,
 That no space for fears
 Has been left by the years.

So, cheerily facing the morrow,
Go forward to joy or to sorrow.
 The God who has blest all thy days,
 Will be with thee in all the new ways,
And goodness and mercy shall follow.

CHRIST'S MAN.

“He endured as seeing Him who is invisible.”

HE bends his head before the blast,
The winds are wild and chill ;
He does not wait till they are past,
But climbs the hill.

The ruthless rains beat on his head,
They cannot stay his feet ;
He scales the path that he must tread
In cold or heat.

Through the fierce gale, with all its roar,
Those who have passed away
Come nearer to him than before
On this lone day.

They kiss his face and hearten him,
He knows that God is sure,
And, though the skies above are dim,
He will endure.

His soldier sons lie on the field,
But sorrow makes him strong ;
The fight is fierce, he will not yield
The whole night long.

Through stress and storm he does his part,
With pain he keeps his tryst ;
A solemn joy is in his heart,
For he sees Christ.

Th' Invisible is manifest
To him, faith's eyes are clear ;
He will not fail in any test
Who knows Christ near.

PROGRESS.

IT is on earth a growing time !
How do things grow ? We cannot tell—
In silence as the roses climb,
Or the mists rise above the dell,
As trees their leafy garments weave,
As the days grow from morn to eve.
Slowly and silently they grow ;
It is no use to watch all night
To find the way the life-streams flow,
Or plants increase in girth and height :
Yet hour by hour, from strength to strength,
The life is perfected at length.
O saddened one, take heart again,
Thou, knowing not, dost grow and rise
Through rest or work, by joy and pain,
Till thou art gracious, strong and wise :
What if thou canst no progress see ?
Thy growth depends on God, not thee.

GOD'S ANSWER.

DOES God scorn our little cares ?
Does He turn from our crude prayers ?
He is wiser than our longings,
And He makes us strong to wait.
But His answers are not given
As we ask them, straight from heaven,
Though His tenderness is wonderful,
His pity passing great.
Do we long to reach the heights,
And amid the sunset lights
Look beneath on scenes of beauty,
And upon all things sublime ?
He will bring the heights no nearer,
But He makes the visions clearer,
And He gives us, as His answer,
Strength enough to toil and climb.

He would have His sailors strong,
Prompt and ready. Fierce and long
Is their struggle with the waters,
As they work with rapid oar.
Once a storm at sea was stilled,
But the God of storm has willed
That 'tis oftener through the tempest
We shall reach the safe home-shore.

Hear the tumult and the rattle
Of a fiercely urgent battle,
Hear the ringing war-prayer sounding
Its alarum in the night :
"Win it for us! Hear our thanks!"
But the private in the ranks
Has another prayer to offer,
"God of battles, give me might!"

God, in answer, sends the best.
Not the easily-won rest,
But the power to strive and conquer
To His greatest comes at length ;
Where the fires are, and the pains,
He His bravest servants trains.
Be thou glad when He has heard thee,
And endues thy soul with strength.

THE LEARNER.

"He wakeneth morning by morning; He wakeneth mine ear to hear."—ISA. L. 4.

IF thou for God wouldst speak,
Be the discernor,
Docile, attentive, meek,
Be thou a learner.

Who trusts in self for love,
Guilty of treason,
Waits not to hear from God
Good words in season.

Who trusts in God alone,
 Messenger cheery,
Takes as from Him to men
 Words for the weary.

Oh ! thou for service hast
 Master most royal !
Thou of the happy lot
 Be not disloyal.

Turn thy whole thoughts to Him,
 All others scorning ;
He will awaken thee
 Morning by morning.

Live all thy life for Him,
 Listen intently ;
Thou shalt be wise to speak
 When He has sent thee.

Hope thou in God ; be not
 Timid or dreary ;
Wait ; He will give to Thee
 Words for the weary.

Sit at Christ's feet and learn,
 Patient, meek, lowly,
Then go thou forth and take
 Ministries holy !

Who is true teacher
 Is the discernor ;
Tongue of the learned is
 Tongue of the learner.

SONGS OF ONE=ANOTHER.

Songs of One=Another.

FEAR NO EVIL.

THOU art with God beloved :
Yield not to fear,
Through the night's dark or storm
He will be near :
Whatever clouds may lower,
What thunders roll,
Evil shall not befall,
He keeps control.

Thou art with God beloved :
Seek thou His face,
Dread not the danger-signs,
Rest in His grace :
Where'er the path shall turn
His lights will shine,
His love shall comfort thee,
His strength be thine.

Thou art with God beloved,
Safe as are they
Who in the Father's house
See Him all day :
Sing, then, the homeland songs,
Soon will you meet,
Thou art as truly kept
Here at His feet.

Thou art with God beloved,
Ay, there or here :
Live thou a joyous life,
Have not a fear ;
Safe in so great a love,
Peaceful and calm,
Shall not thy life become
One trustful psalm ?

ON THE MARCH.

THE marching orders come to all,
And we arise and start together,
For none may plead his feebleness,
Or halt for stress of weather ;
And none may hide himself away,
Hoping his name shall be passed over :
The roll-call summons everyone
From every kind of cover.

And old men's feet, whose steps are slow,
And feet of children light and ready,
People with quick and eager tread,
Or steps serene and steady,
All fain must march along the road
And keep the way with stern insistence,
For young and aged every day
Must traverse the same distance.

Rough ways there are, and valleys dark,
And need enough of comrades cheery,
And hills that are so steep to climb
That climbers soon grow weary.
Yet flowers, for those with eyes to see,
And many pleasant resting-places,
Are found along the line of march
To shorten dreary spaces.

If hand to hand and heart to heart
We with our fellows took these marches,
Earth-ways would be as beautiful
As heaven that o'er us arches.
It would be summer all the year,
With blooming hopes and joyous singing :
And feet that now lag heavily
Would learn the art of springing.

We, travellers on the great high-road,
So near and yet so little blending,
Must all pass through one narrow gate
And find the self-same ending.
Why not be comrades all the way,
And hail the nearest friend and brother ?
The road leads to the Father's house,
And there they love each other !

IN A CROWD.

ROUND me, before me, behind me,
People I do not know !
We meet and touch for a moment,
Then apart for ever we go.
And what can we have in common
Who glance in each other's face,
And wait in the world together
For only so short a space ?
Ah ! really we are not strangers,
Though our homes lie far apart,
But children of one great Father,
Who keeps us all in His heart !

And have we not much in common
To do, and perhaps to bear ?
Regret for the years that are over,
Sorrow, and pain, and care ?
I know you have had to suffer,
And oftener still to be glad,
For trouble is not for ever,
And no one is always sad.
But I know that the days have been dark enough,
For mine have been darkened too,
And a thought of neighbourly sympathy
Has stirred in my heart for you.

There are marks in most of your faces,
And I see the sign of a cross
That is given to you to carry,
But life is not meant for loss.
And I hear the sound of your laughter,
And see the light in your eyes,
And perhaps there are little children
To make you tender and wise.
There is surely some joy in the world for all,
And to each is given some love,
For gentle hearts are in every place,
And the blessing comes from above.

So we wish God-speed to each other,
Though we utter it not aloud ;
We are brothers and sisters together,
Though we only meet in a crowd.
Do we not work for the same good end,
Loyal to truth and the right ?
And look for a glorious future,
And try to walk in the light ?
What though we know not each other,
Since the Father knows us all ?
Perhaps we shall meet in the same dear home
When the shades of evening fall !

A MAN OF PRAYER.

HE has the wise and merry heart,
His laugh is real, his jest is glad,
In quietness he does his part,
If gay or sad.

He walks beside you in the street,
His watchful eyes look out on men,
And all whom he may chance to meet
Love him again.

He does not talk of that he feels,
But in his secret soul he knows
How powerful is the faith that heals
And brings repose.

He does not spend a day alone,
For God is with him everywhere,
And by his spirit he is known
A man of prayer.

The storms may beat above his head,
And the thick darkness shroud his way,
But he is not un comforted,
For he can pray.

He has two lives ; and one he gives
To daily duties as they come ;
The other tranquilly he lives
With God at home.

And he is happy every day,
Although the world is full of care,
Because his heart, through all life's way,
Finds rest in prayer.

“FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED.”

HE walks beside you in the street,
The crowded street of commonplace,
And does but glance into your face
A moment when you chance to meet ;

But eyes made wise by love can see,
However swift his steps may be,
He carries with him everywhere
A weight of care.

You have your burden, too ; but yet
It does not press at all sometimes,
And you can hear the heavenly chimes,
And so the weary way forget ;
You have a Friend your griefs to share,
And listen to your softest prayer.
You know how safely they abide,
For whom Christ died.

But he has found it hard to trust,
For life is hard and rough to him ;
The skies above his head are dim,
And his work lies among the dust.
Small hope has he to cheer his way,
Nor light of love to make his day,
No heavenly music meets his ears
Through all the years.

He is your brother, give him love !
“ Destroy not him for whom Christ died ”
By tyranny, neglect, or pride.
Within the Father’s house above
Is room for him and you ; and here
You well may hold your brother dear,
Nor make the space between you wide,
For whom Christ died.

Oh greet your brother in the street
With friendly smile and helping hand ;
Give him his portion in the land,
Be good to him whene’er you meet.
It may be through your care that he
The Father’s love and care may see ;
Then win and keep him by your side,
For whom Christ died.

FAITH AND FIDELITY.

“ Around this temple, let the merchant’s law be just, his weights true, and his contracts guileless.”—*Discovered by Mr. Ruskin in the first church of Venice.*

NOT far the Father’s house is set
From any one of us, and yet
How oft its meaning we forget !

’Tis sweet to join the sacred psalm,
And fill the soul with Sabbath calm,
And feel God’s touch on brow and palm.

But when the holy words are said,
And the world comes to us instead,
Who keeps for God the hand and head ?

We put our houses round the place
Where we have sought and seen His face,
And hoped to bear away His grace.

But who will, for His honour’s sake,
Into the world the same laws take,
And never God’s commandments break ?

Who does his business day by day
As if to sell were but to pray,
And walks with God his whole life’s way ?

Who does not show real piety
By dealing with true equity,
He cannot worship worthily.

But if because of God’s great peace
All self and evil henceforth cease,
Then shall the joy in Him increase.

The life of highest, purest tone
Is the religious life alone ;
And by their works are Christians known.

"THY BURDEN."

To everyone on earth
God gives a burden to be carried down
The road that lies between the cross and crown.
No lot is wholly free ;
He giveth one to thee.

Some carry it aloft,
Open and visible to any eyes,
And all may see its form, and weight, and size.
Some hide it in their breast,
And deem it thus unguessed.

The burden is God's gift,
And it will make the bearer calm and strong,
Yet, lest it press too heavily and long,
He says, Cast it on Me,
And it shall easy be.

And those who heed His voice,
And seek to give it back in trustful prayer,
Have quiet hearts that never can despair ;
And Hope lights up the way
Upon the darkest day.

Take thou thy burden thus
Into thy hands, and lay it at His feet,
And whether it be sorrow or defeat,
Or pain, or sin, or care,
It will grow lighter there.

It is the lonely load
That crushes out the life and light of heaven ;
But, borne with Him, the soul, restored, forgiven,
Sings out through all the days
Her joy, and God's high praise.

LOVE THE REVEALER.

“As water sheweth face to face, so the heart sheweth man to man.”
—PROV. XXVII. 19 (R.V.).

It is when the heart is barren,
Nor the waters of love are near,
That the man knows not his neighbour,
And is moved by hate and fear.
The city is dreary desert
When love is slain by drought,
And it is not the evil spirit
But the good that is cast out.

By the river of living water,
When streams in the desert flow,
The eyes grow bright for seeing,
And the heart is swift to know.
And, ah ! how glad is the sunlight,
How fair are the skies above,
For the freight brought over the water
Is the golden dust of love.

Hatred is like a demon
That dwells in the gloom of night,
But love is a beautiful angel
Clad in a robe of light.
And not in the dark, but in daylight,
Do we see each other's face,
And the knowledge is born of affection
That shows us the form of grace.

A brother is but a stranger
When the heart has nought to say,
But a stranger may be a brother
When love has had its way.
For love is the great revealer
Alike in age and in youth—
It is not the head that teaches,
But the heart that knows the truth.

CHRIST'S FRIEND AND THE PEOPLE'S.

"He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."—JESUS.

NOT years but sorrows must have made you old.

I can remember how you took your choice—

"Better," you said, "than fame, or ease, or gold,

Is it to make the aching hearts rejoice.

I choose to follow Jesus; He will see

That lessons in love's lore are given to me."

And you have gone on learning; for love's sake

You have borne burdens that were not your own;

Often while others slept you were awake

To wait and watch, and answer sorrow's moan;

Into your own heart you have pressed life's woes

That others might be stronger for repose.

Deep lines are on your face, your hair is grey;

You have spent lavishly your life in years;

A month has gone as if it were a day,

No losses have you counted but of tears.

And now the shadows fall, the lights go out—

Now, are you sorry with regret and doubt?

Ah, no! for you have fellowship with Christ;

His joy lights up your face and fills your heart;

You are not lonely, for He keeps the tryst—

You cannot grieve who choose the better part.

There is no wealth like yours, nor higher fame

Than rests on worthy bearers of Christ's name.

Pass on your way of blessing—widows' prayers

And orphans' kisses and the smile of God

Lift up your life above all sordid cares.

It is the heavenward path your feet have trod,

And you have lived as fully in one day

As others have in years. Pass on your way.

Old and worn out? Nay, yours is life indeed—

The life that ever lives and cannot die!

Christ gives you every day the hero's meed

Of praise and honour, so you live on high

With Him already. Yours not death, nor strife—

For Him you lose, with Him you find, your life.

SONGS OF TIMES AND SEASONS.

Songs of Times and Seasons.

IF YOU ARE OLD.

If you are old earth grows more fair
With every passing year ;
There is new sweetness in the air,
New beauty in a tear ;
And opal colours on the sea
Are lovelier than they used to be,
And all things grow more dear,
Because the glowing autumn light
Keeps off awhile the coming night.

If you are old you love your friends
With wistful, tender care,
As if your heart would make amends
For wrong done unaware.
And all their patient gentleness,
Which comes your evening hours to bless
Inspires a trembling prayer
That God's great love may still last on
And keep them safe when you are gone.

If you are old the fading past
Is fair as any dream ;
It was too good, too glad to last,
Though then it did not seem
As bright and beautiful as now,
When memory makes your head to bow,
And here and there a gleam
Lights up the traversed road, and thrills
Your heart with its green vales and hills

If you are old you are afraid
That what your hands have wrought,
What you have spoken or have made,
Is not as once you thought :
So mean it is, so small and poor,
With nothing in it to endure ;
You worked not as you ought.
And now, with but a span to live,
Your heart cries out, " Forgive ! Forgive ! "

If you are old you stand aside,
And watch the fight and fray,
While others pass you in their pride,
Who once were brave as they.
Your part it is to cry " Well done ! "
When others have the victory won ;
Your part it is to pray
That all the strong young men may fight
Better than you did for the right.

If you are old your prayer is heard
For quiet and for rest ;
More gently now the winds are stirred,
The sun is in the west ;
And silent lips, and folded hands,
And waves that die upon the sands
In perfect calm are best ;
And One comes near to stand beside
And comfort you at eventide.

If you are old, you have this word
" Thine eyes shall see the King. "
The sweetest promise ever heard
Even in gladdest spring.
And if your heart has any doubt,
The love of God shall cast it out,
And cause your lips to sing.
Lift up your head and look on high,
" For your redemption draweth nigh ! "

LENT.

ARE there no Lenten fasts for me to keep ?
Yea, though thou hallow not the special days,
Thou hast thy sorrows, for thou hast thy sins.
Lent brings thee pause before the summer-time,
Therefore bethink thee how the weeds have grown
Through the long winter of thy heedlessness,
Within the fertile garden of thy heart,
Which should have been a garden of the Lord.
Search, too, thy memory, and it shall bring
Reason for self-denying penances
For all the duties thou hast left undone,
For all thy pride and selfishness and sloth,
And the unloving hardness of the life
That should have blossomed into warmth of love.
And brought forth fruits of service to God's praise.
Remember all the days kept for thyself,
And the few hurried minutes given to Him
Who should have filled thy years from birth to death.
Be shamed to think of all the poverty
Of even thy best ministries to men,
And how nor heart nor hand is generous
Because thou art disloyal to thy faith
In Him who suffered for thee on the cross.
Aye, there is need for thee to fast and pray !
Yet in the sun that diamonds the snow
There is a message for thee. Peace and joy
And holiness and love are Christ's to give,
And Easter shall be bright with flowers of hope.
Lift up thy heart to Him, the Risen One,
And leave thy sins and sorrows at the cross.

THE MARCH OF THE YEARS.

Do you hear the rhythmic beat
Of the firm and forward feet
 Of the years ?
White with frost and red with heat,
Charged with gifts to all they meet
On desolate wold, in crowded street,
 March the years.

You may watch them as they go
Through life's stages, as they grow
 Into might.
First in Spring's imperial glow,
Next the Summer's flash and flow,
Lastly, age and Winter's snow,
 And long night.

Steady, regular the pace,
Every movement full of grace,
 March the years.
Yet he runs a breathless race,
And his forces he must brace,
Who keeps step by step through space
 With these years.

They are charged with gifts for man,
Let him wrest the best who can
 From the mass.
Shadow, substance, deed and plan,
Honour's gold, dream's talisman,
You may seize—but for a span—
 As they pass.

They can heal your heart, or break ;
They can mock your thirst, or slake ;
 Smiles or tears
They can give and you must take ;
Yet they come for love's own sake,
And true servants you may make
 Of these years.

Of their marchings to and fro
The eternal God doth know ;
 He is King.
Let them come and let them go,
God is in each one, and so
All is well. Come weal or woe,
 God is King.

THE CERTAINTIES OF A NEW YEAR.

A NEW YEAR has a smiling face,
But tells no tales of what may be ;
In silent power he takes his place,
And wraps him in uncertainty.
And yet some things I count upon
Which he must give ere he be gone.

I count upon some real advance ;
This slow old world a stage will move,
And call from out its dissonance
A new, sweet melody of love ;
And something will compel the year
To bring all good a step more near.

I count upon some Godward growth
Among the peoples of the earth ;
They lose their way and break their troth
Forgetful of their heavenly birth ;
But ever shorter grows the night,
And clearer, every year, the light.

I count upon a large increase
Of those who love their fellow-men,
Who feel the angel's touch of peace,
And hear the Bethlehem song again,
And spend themselves in ministries,
And wake forgotten harmonies.

I count upon a Father's care ;
Men shall not lose Him in the dark ;
Nothing can hurt them unaware
Whom God takes up into His ark ;
And let the year bring shine or shade,
God's children need not be afraid.

I count upon some tears to shed,
Some sleepless nights, some weary days,
Some heaviness of heart and head,
Some thorny paths, some stony ways :
These, more or less, for everyone,
But joy and rest when all is done.

The love of God I count upon
As on the mountains in their strength ;
It has not failed in the years gone,
It will last on through all life's length ;
I cannot count on my own love,
But His is sure as heaven above.

Has the New Year a secret face ?
There are some things he cannot hide :
Welcome him all, and give him place,
Long as he can he may abide !
He has surprises for us ? Well,
We trust him—he the rest shall tell !

A PSALM OF AGES.

"LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling-place,"
One sang, but who knows when ?
Far back among the earliest years
God gave this faith to men ;
And this strong psalm of trust was sung
By one who rough ways trod :
"From everlasting Thou art God,
To everlasting God."

And ever since, through all the years,
Souls that were near despair
Have voiced their helplessness and hope
In this most ancient prayer :
“ Man’s life is like a sleep ; like grass
He withereth away.
O everlasting God, be Thou
Our dwelling-place to-day.”

Ah ! in what crisis, through what strain,
These solemn words are said !
In storm and stress, in loss and wreck.
This prayer is heavenward sped.
We have no other dwelling-place
When the heart breaks with grief ;
The everlasting life of God
Gives even death relief.

What hosts of martyr heroes fall,
With hearts and faces calm,
Because the music of their lives
Passes in this brave psalm !
From China, Congo, Turkey, list !
Sweetly the echoes come,
“ Our God, our help in ages past,
And our eternal home ! ”

And you and I, whose passing years
Are like a short tale told,
Who see through mists of memory
The things that make us old—
We can take up the song to-day,
The triumph song of grace—
Thou art the everlasting God,
Thou art our dwelling-place.

THE NOONTIDE PRAYER.

All members of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union
offer simultaneous intercessory prayer at noon.

UPLIFT the wistful pleading eyes,
Fold into rest the hands,
Join the soft voices heavenward sent
From near and distant lands.
O women of a thousand cares,
Take pause, and join your sisters' prayers.
No rest is like the hush that falls
Amidst the stress and strain,
When the thronged soul withdraws herself
And finds her God again.
Let the world's whirl of work go by
While the heart worships silently.
Swift, helpful hands and busy brains,
Eager to do God's will,
You fill with work the morning hours—
At noon take rest, be still.
Brave-hearted, you are sometimes weak,
Speak now to Him, and hear Him speak.
Women, who love and give yourselves,
As Jesus gave His life,
Know that faith has its mountain heights,
Even amid the strife;
Come home to God a little while,
And know the sweetness of His smile.
The world has its bewildering ways,
But in devotion's calm
The strenuous will may be controlled,
The glad heart sing its psalm;
And love that cannot do enough
Find rest in prayer, though times are rough.
Therefore, take time at noon to pray,
For God may fill this hour
With blessings past your dreams, and show
His love, and His great power.
For you, and those for whom you pray—
Bring Him the golden noon of day.

THE NEWS OF PEACE.

NEVER was summer so glad as this,
June came in with an angel's kiss ;
It is joy not sorrow, life not death,
That speaks through a people's sobbing breath
Thank God !

Sweet is the song of the laughing morn,
Gay is the dance of the graceful corn,
In the woodland ways and the fertile vales
Sing larks and thrushes and nightingales.
Thank God !

And ah ! for the thankful hearts that beat
In the million homes, or the crowded street,
For the joy that thrills in the soul of June
Is a psalm that is set to a heavenly tune.
Thank God !

Sing with us, other lands than ours :
Italy covered with sweetest flowers,
Switzerland under a crown of snows,
France and Germany, friends not foes
Thank God !

Ye who late were our foemen brave,
Send us a message under the wave :
Brothers, forgive us, as we forgive,
Love us, we love you : so let us live.
Thank God !

Alas ! for the harvest of war ! Not yet
Can hearts that are broken with grief forget
The awful cost of the victory ;
But the angel of comfort is standing by ;
Thank God !

Now let sorrow and discord cease,
For this is the beautiful time of peace :
June came in with an angel's kiss,
And never was summer so glad as this.
Thank God !

ITALY, *June 5*, 1902.

THE YEARS.

The years that climb uphill
Are very slow,
And yet they are young years
That linger so :
The years that race downhill
Are short of breath,
And cannot stop themselves
Till stopped by death.
Each young year gaily bears
A sun-kissed face,
A lifted brow to meet
A world of grace.
A heart by hope kept brave,
Feet swift and strong,
A voice that sings to heaven
Faith's gladsome song.
The old years are serene
With quiet rest,
Not theirs to spend themselves
In eager quest,
And yet their faces turn
Toward the heights,
Where golden colours glow
In evening lights.
Some years are never old,
They always climb,
From youth to age they rise
To things sublime :
Their path is toward the stars,
Their steps are stairs,
And presently they gain
Heaven unawares.
Go thou with years that climb,
Whate'er thine age,
The lifted eyes can see
Fair heritage ;
Go with them nearer God,
From doubts and fears,
And may He make thee rich
With wealth of years.

EVENSONGS.

Evensongs.

THE "CITY OF PAUSE."

IN the "City of Pause" the walls are thick,
No sound can break through the stone and brick ;
But a deep hush lies on the outside earth,

And the solemn moorlands are brown and dark ;
Within there is silence instead of mirth,

And without, no song of the spring-glad lark,
And far away is a sea that sighs
As if for the mournful thoughts that arise.

In the "City of Pause" there is nothing to do,
No noisy duty to cry "Pursue !"

But with folded hands the workers wait,

And look at each other in mute appeal,
And little they care that the hour is late,

So great are the loss and the pain they feel ;
But they wonder a little, "How long will it last ?
And what will follow when this is past ?"

From the "City of Pause" some pass away
To the unknown land and the cloudless day,
And they leave the scenes of the waiting place,

The toil and sorrow, the care and pain,
And they are missed for a little space,

And none may summon them back again.
And those who love them can only know
That God takes care of them where they go

From the "City of Pause" some pass away
To the common light of the working-day ;
And lo ! the old hard tasks and the care,

And the dear familiar toiling place,
Have grown transfigured and strangely fair,

And even the unloved things have grace ;
So they thank their God for the sweet new laws
That are learnt in the silent "City of Pause."

WHEN I GO HOME.

WHEN I go home it will be evening,
And I shall hear my own dear people sing,
And see the lighted rooms, and take my place
As one with them, in that sweet time of grace.

When I go home I shall be very tired
Of struggling for the things that I desired,
But I shall be content to end my quest,
Gaining the best things, peace and love and rest.

When I go home how sorry I shall be
Not to have brought more treasures back with me !
Yet, though I be a failure, worn and poor,
They will not turn me from my Father's door.

When I go home I shall be travel-stained,
For winds have beaten me, and storms have rained,
And earth has clung to me by vale and hill,
But they will take me in, and love me still.

When I go home—oh, will it not be heaven
To be restored, accepted, loved, forgiven ?
Sorrow and sighing are for those who roam ;
I shall have found my bliss when I go home.

THE PLACE PREPARED.

WHERE does it lie, that land of rest,
To which the over-wearied pass ?
Where are the ways which they have pressed,
Or the soft meadows, green with grass,
Through which they go into the shade
Of the home-place the Lord has made ?

Perhaps it is not far away,
Nor is the lonely journey long ;
Swiftly the night yields to the day,
And silence passes into song.
But where ? It matters not. Their place
Is where at last they see His face.

So close the door shuts after them,
Nor sight nor sound can reach us here ;
Faintly we speak the requiem,
And still it seems that they are near.
We cannot tell, we only know
That Christ receives them where they go.

But that is surely heaven enough :
Where Jesus is, their home shall be,
The storms have ceased which once were rough,
And gently, o'er a tranquil sea,
Knowing no care because He cared,
They reach the home He has prepared.

Love made it ready. Love is wise.
Oh, happy they who safe at home
Have had the tears wiped from their eyes,
Assured that no more grief shall come.
For Christ has borne away their cares,
And He has answered all their prayers.

Safely to that Abiding-Place,
O Christ, guide Thou our pilgrim feet ;
We also long to see Thy face,
And be with them. Oh, make us meet
Within our Father's house to be,
Where'er it is, at home with Thee.

WHERE THE MOTHERS GO.

THAT is surely home
Where the mothers go,
In that House can come
Neither sin nor woe,
They have found somewhere
Scenes for praise and prayer,
And all peace is there,
Where the mothers go.

Sweetly do they rest
Where the mothers stay ;
All that is the best
In God's heaven have they.
And at set of sun,
Christ's approval won,
Hear they His "Well done"—
Happy, happy they !

Listen how they sing
Where the mothers are !
They have found the King,
Following His star.
Glad are they to meet
At their Saviour's feet,
All their joy complete,
Near, who once were far.

God, when earth is past,
Where the mothers wait,
Bring us safe at last
Through the open gate !
All unworthy we,
Yet we long to be
Where Thy face we see,
And our mothers wait.

WHERE THE CHILDREN ARE.

“Jesus called a little child unto Him.”

ALL the year was as merry as spring,
When the home was filled with the children's laughter
Gay were the songs they used to sing,
And none cared to wonder what came after.
Every day was a time of glee
When the children were here, love, with you and me

This is the summer they loved so well,
These are the paths we trod together,
And oh, for the tales we used to tell,
When kept indoors by the wind and weather.
Never were blessings so plentiful,
Never were children so beautiful.

Where are they now? You told them, dear,
Of One who lived in a lovely city,
But made His dwelling with poor folk here,
For His heart was filled with love and pity.
You talked to the children of Jesus so
That they were not afraid when He bade them go.

They heard His voice in the midst of play,
And grew more quiet to Him to listen;
He spoke their names, and away, away,
They went where they saw His kind eyes glisten.
We could not follow, so fast they flew;
But wait, the Master will call us too.

I do not know where heaven can be!
Sometimes, when the western skies are golden
With light and glory, it seems to me
That there our darlings are safely folden;
But this I know, that to God's own home
Christ called the children, and they have come.

Life without them is sad and drear,
But our love for them than ourselves was stronger.
Darkness, trouble, and pain are here,
And might have been theirs had they lingered longer.
This is our comfort, that we can see
They are better with Christ than with you or me.

A DREAM.

I DREAMED I met again my dead ;
And to the first who came I said,
" I have not mourned my loss, but this
That thy life had so little bliss :
I prayed my God by day and night
To make thy way a path of light,
But He led on through storm and dark,
He guided through rough seas thy barque,
He gave thee failure for success,
He multiplied for thee distress,
He dashed the cup of joy from thee,
And left me this sad memory
Of all thy burden, all thy care,
And sorrow of unanswered prayer."
But he replied, " And was it so ?
Did care its shadow fling ?
My sorrows ended long ago,
For I have seen the King."

And then I thought another came,
And spoke in old sweet tones my name,
But I could only look through tears
On the dear face I loved for years ;
And, " Ah," I said, " my heart is sore
For all the suffering thy heart bore :
Thy anguish was so very great,
From early morn till midnight late ;

And through such awful stress and strife
Thou fought'st the battle of thy life,
That when I think upon it all,
Grief falls upon me like a pall.
Why was it that through seas of pain
God let thee go His rest to gain ? ”
But she replied, “ That pain of mine
Was but a transient thing,
I have a joy that is divine,
Mine eyes have seen the King.”

And then it seemed a little crowd
Of friends, half hidden in the cloud,
Echoed the words for me to hear—
“ All things are well ; be of good cheer ;
The night dies out before the day,
The sun smiles all the clouds away ;
Who sees the King in glory clad
Forgets that he was ever sad,
And we have seen the Master's grace,
And we have gazed upon His face,
Therefore it is that grief is not,
For every sorrow is forgot,
And only blessing, love and mirth
Do we remember of the earth.
Be glad.” they said, “ for us and thee,
Nor grieve for anything.
Soon shall thy day of rapture be,
Thine eyes shall see the King.”

TOO SOON?

GOD sometimes calls those servants home
Whose years are in their prime,
But He has better measures than
The pendulum of time :
Some workers quickly do their task
Of service and of love,
So their promotion early comes
To higher work above.

God loves them, and He spares them much :
Not theirs to wait alone,
And feel the ache of useless years,
With strength and vigour gone ;
They are not stranded derelicts
While tides go rushing by ;
They do their part, and win the race,
And then they gently die.

Not theirs to lift their fading eyes
And find no comrades left ;
Not theirs to dwell among the graves,
Forsaken and bereft :
They pass from work to better work,
And rest before the noon.
Ah ! God is very good to them.
They do not die too soon.

SWIFT TRAVELLERS.

OUR dead—they travel fast !
Who sees them hurry past ?

Scarce is the farewell said,
Than—where are they, our dead ?

Out of our touch and reach,
Out of our sight and speech.

As swift as thought they go,
Past weariness and woe.

Yet, are they far away ?
We meet, at break of day.

Not far from love and prayer,
But into higher care ;

Far from earth's pain and strife
Into abundant life ;

Far from the land of tears,
To where their Lord appears.

He bids all discords cease,
And takes them into peace.

Our dead—they travel fast,
And rest with God at last.

“WHENCE CAME THEY?”

BEHOLD ! a stately company,

The nobly great of every land,

Heroes of earth's best chivalry,

The hosts before the throne who stand,

Angels, and elders of renown,

With brows bent low for God to crown,

“They stand within the shining day”—

But these in white robes, who are they?

See, *here* are prophets, poets, seers,

Who bore the names that cannot fade ;

And captains *these* who led the years,

And *these* great hearts were not dismayed ;

These did the deeds that ages praise,

These ruled the Empire of the days ;

Therefore, they stand in brave array—

But these in white robes, whence are they?

Ah, these, the dearest to the Christ,

These are the Lamb's own comrades true

With Him and pain they kept the tryst,

And for His sake great sorrows knew.

They, loyal ever to His Name,

Out of much tribulation came,

And in His blood, and in heaven's light,

They washed their robes and made them white.

Therefore are they before the throne ;

The light of love is in their eyes ;

He has great honours for His own.

Oh, happy they whom love made wise !

They are at home with Him ; His grace

Makes their glad heaven ; they see His face,

And serve Him ever, day and night,

For these are they whose robes are white.

AT EVENING.

“And they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent : and He went in to abide with them.”

WE, too, constrain Thee, Christ, who bears our sorrows !
This short, swift day of ours is so far spent,
And so uncertain are the misty morrows,
That when we try to sing we but lament.

Thou didst walk with us through the sunny meadows,
When the birds sang, and flowers were gay and bright ;
Oh, leave us not amid these gathering shadows,
The awful black-winged heralds of the night.

We have been left alone by many others ;
Our dear companions in the morning hours,
The gentle sisters, and the merry brothers—
We cannot find them now the darkness lowers.

Yet go not Thou ! Alas ! we used to leave Thee !
Forgive the sins of our too busy morn :
We do repent that we could ever grieve Thee,
Yet now Thou wilt not let us be forlorn.

But Thou dost come when we are slowly walking
Through dreary paths, o'er desolate dead leaves,
And Thou dost listen to our pensive talking
About the little good our life achieves.

Thou knowest all our questionings together,
When we are standing still and looking sad ;
And Thou dost speak of suffering, and whether
For Thee or Thine the earth can aye be glad.

And our hearts burn within us while we listen.
And we regret no more the waning day ;
The breeze brings music, and the clear stars glisten.
And all that comes is right and best, we say.

Come and abide with us, then, gracious Master ;
Deign to sit down with us, and give us peace ;
Within Thy Presence can be no disaster,
Trouble will pass, and every fear will cease.

Little it matters though no light be given,
And though all earthly treasures absent be ;
There is no night where Thou dost make our heaven,
And we miss nothing while we talk to Thee.

THE SINGER'S CLOSING SONG.

“ Let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.
The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.”

WHAT was left for him to say ?
What remained to sing or pray,
When that grand finale trembled through the Temple in its
glory ?
Should not after silence fall
On the lips that uttered all
The great hymn of heaven and earth in that song of sacred
story ?

He had sung of many themes,
For to him the pleasant gleams
Of the sun upon the valley, or the starlights in the sky,
Were the signs of holy calm,
And inspired the praiseful psalm
That up-carried hearts of men to the Father's heart on high.

As a simple shepherd-boy
He had carolled forth his joy,
When he rested by still waters in the pastures God had spread.
As a fugitive afraid,
He had sung of ready aid
In the refuge and the fortress of the God to whom he fled.

And in golden days the king
Could not help but gladly sing
Of the goodness and the mercy that had made his heart rejoice :
In the sunshine of his life,
In the shadows and the strife,
The Psalmist's heart made music to the rapture in his voice.

Of the noise of waves and seas,
Of the flocks upon the leas,
Of the rock's refreshing shelter, of the mountain high and strong ;
Of the fields in verdure clad,
Of the river making glad,
Of the morning and the evening, had the singer made his song:

But the lay was still unfinished,
Till the glory undiminished
Of the Son of God was shown him, and he saw the joy before ;
Then the greatness of His name
And the honour of His fame
Filled the singer's heart with rapture, and he knew his singing
o'er.

Blessed be His name for ever,
Prayers and praise to Him cease never,
All the earth shall call Him blessed, and in Him be blest all
men.

Let the nations tell the story,
And the whole earth know the glory
Of His reign that lasts for ever. Blessed be His Name. Amen.

O happy, happy singer !
Joy-inspiring, pleasure-bringer !
Greatest honour for thy guerdon was the publishing His fame !
We, whose songs are weak and lowly,
Fain would sing of Jesus solely,
And be hushed to death's last silence by the sweetness of His
Name.

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